

SOCIAL MEDIA AS AN EFFECTIVE ADVERTISING TOOL IN KENYA

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K50/80973/2012

**A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS IN COMMUNICATION AT THE SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM:
THE UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI**

OCTOBER, 2014

Declaration

This thesis is my original work and has not been presented in and/or to any forum or audience, in any other university or examination body.

Signed.....

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This thesis has been submitted for the award of M.A Degree in Mass Communication and media studies with my approval as the University Supervisor.

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Acknowledgement

This report documents my master thesis research on Social media Marketing on a business perspective. It highlights the issues I have discovered and dealt with while studying Communication as a subject and venturing into social media management field.

In the preparation of this master thesis, I acknowledge the encouragement and Support by Mr. Polycap Ochillo, my Master's Thesis supervisor, for his assistance in intellectual guidance, consistency and interpretations of some underpinning theoretical issues. These have proved useful in my final analysis of my field

I would acknowledge the support by Christine Sayo ,a fellow masters student for proof reading my thesis.

I would also like to express my gratitude to my Mum together with my Sisters and brothers for being patient with me throughout the project.

List of tables

Table 1: Survey Respondent Characteristics

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Declaration	ii
Acknowledgement	iii
List of tables.....	iv
Abstract.....	1
CHAPTER ONE: SOCIAL MEDIA AS AN ADVERTISING PLATFORM: AN OVERVIEW .	3
INTRODUCTION.....	3
1.1 Background of the study	3
1.1.1 Mainstream Media.....	4
1.1.2 Social media.	5
1.1.3 Evolution from Mainstream Media to Social media.	19
1.1.4 Significance of using advertisements on Social media in Kenya.	22
1.2 Statement of the Problem	24
1.3 Objectives of the Study	26
1.4 Research Questions	26
1.5 Justification of the Study.....	27
1.6 Conclusion.....	30
References.....	30
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW	32
INTRODUCTION.....	32
2.1 Social media	32
2.2 Social media as advertising strategy.....	34
2.3.1 Hierarchy of Effects.....	36
2.3.2 Lavidge and Steiner’s (1961) hierarchy of effects.	39
2.3.3 Applications of the Hierarchy.....	40
2.3.4 The Modern Hierarchy of Effects.....	41
2.3.5 Six-Segment Strategy Wheel.....	43
2.4 Conclusion.....	46
References.....	46

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	50
3.1 INTRODUCTION.....	50
3.2 Research Design.....	51
3.3 Research Population.....	53
3.4 Research Approach; Sampling and Sampling Techniques	53
3.5 Data Collection Methods.....	54
3.6 Data Analysis	54
3.7 Limitations and challenges of the Study	55
3.8 Conclusion.....	56
References.....	56
CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS OF THE STUDY.....	57
4.1 INTRODUCTION.....	57
4.2 Background Information of Research Respondents.....	57
4.3. Awareness on Use of Social media for Advertising	63
Source: Field Survey 2014	66
4.4 Understanding Consumption Habits of Social media Adverts.....	67
4.5 Effectiveness of Social media Advertisements in Influencing Buying Decisions	72
4.6 Conclusion.	77
References.	77
CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY RECCOMEDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS	79
5.1 INTRODUCTION:.....	79
5.2 Summary Recommendations:	79
5.2.1 What is the general level of awareness on the importance of social media as an advertising tool by companies in Kenya.....	81
5.2.2 What are the consumption habits of advertisements by the general public on social media?.....	82
5.2.3 How effective is social media advertisements in influencing buying decisions among Kenyans?	82
5.3 Recommendation for future research.	83
5.4 Recommendation to social media experts and practioners	84

5.5 Conclusion.....	85
References.....	87
Bibliography	89
ANNEXES	94
Appendix 1: Interview Guide (Social media Managers and Celebrities)	94
Appendix 2: Questionnaire for Survey Participants.....	95

Abstract

It is without a doubt that the world is evolving from Traditional Media to New Media. The growing usage of social media indicates a potentially effective new platform for advertisers. With this new form of communication, comes a new way of looking at advertising. Traditional media is typically delivered through campaigns that have a definitive start and stop state. Social media doesn't have an end date. It is an ongoing conversation between the advertiser and the customer.

Over the years, we have seen social media usage grow rapidly in Kenya, and as expected, to keep up with the times and remain relevant in their various industries, Kenyan companies have adopted social media as a major component in their marketing mix. This study explored how Kenyans can use this platform effectively for marketing and communications to achieve maximum results. Kenyan companies know about social media and understand its importance but not many know the most effective way of using this medium as an advertising tool. This has therefore lead to a lot of wastage in terms of revenue and time.

This study sought to provide an analysis of current commercial social media usage by critically evaluating the most effective ways to utilize these social media platforms as advertising tools here in Kenya. The study employed both qualitative and quantitative approaches. The quantitative approach focused on obtaining numerical findings through a survey method. We performed an online survey of the general public to understand how they receive advertisements on social media The interview on the other hand, made up the qualitative approach of the study. This focused on personal accounts, observations, description and individual insights of the respondents. The research attained this by conducting interviews at different digital creative

agencies and full-service agencies. This study employed the combined approach so as to overcome the limitations of both approaches.

The outcome of this study will revolutionize how companies communicate with the general public by revealing how their target market behaves on social media. The study revealed the critically needed knowledge on how to engage with their target market, when to engage with them and the tone to use with them in order to attain maximum advertising results.

Agnes Mumbi Barasa

October, 2014.

CHAPTER ONE: SOCIAL MEDIA AS AN ADVERTISING PLATFORM: AN OVERVIEW

INTRODUCTION.

This chapter introduces the reader to the topic of the thesis. The background provides information relating to the history and current situation of the topic as discussed in the paper. This is followed by general definitions of the segments on how marketing communication has evolved and social media has emerged as key advertising tool and how we can utilize it as an advertising tool effectively; which is the focus of this thesis. Subsequently, the problem discussion narrows down the topic and ends with the definitions of research questions, which is answered in the main part with some illustrations.

1.1 Background of the study

To understand the evolution from old media to new media, it is important to distinguish between the two and understand how they both work as advertising tools. In order to understand the importance of using social media as an advertising tool, it is important to understand how advertising used to work and get to understand how it has evolved.

According to (Mulhern 2009; 10), media is experiencing a digital revolution which is liberating news, information, and advertising from the confines of traditional print and broadcast delivery systems. Before getting into details on the evolution of traditional media to Social media and how to effectively communicate using Social media, it is important to understand the difference between the two forms of media communication.

1.1.1 Mainstream Media.

Mainstream media is the term used to encompass conventional forms of advertising media such as television, print, radio, direct mail and outdoor. As depicted, below is the representation of different media channels of communication.

Fig 1: Visual examples of mainstream media



Media advertising is a form of marketing communication used to persuade an audience to take some desired actions, which in most cases is to buy a product or service. The intention is to drive consumer behavior by selling the product's unique value propositions. Advertisers seek to increase consumptions by telling and repeating the brand message to the target market. Advertisers control the message and their brand. It's a show and tell exercise.

Mainstream media advertising is one-way communication. This has been the basis of advertising since inception. In Kenya, the cost of advertising using mainstream media is a very expensive venture. According to Radio Africa rate card (2014) basic advertising campaign using mainstream media ranges from 5,000,000 – 9,000,000 shillings.

1.1.2 Social media.

(Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010; 4) define social media as —a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, which facilitates the creation and exchange of user- generated content. It consists of different Internet applications such as blogs, social networking sites, content communities, collaborative projects, virtual game worlds and social worlds. Other scholars such as Russell S. Winer (2009) affirm that many companies today are using some or all of the new media to develop targeted campaigns that reach specific segments and engage their customers to a much greater extent than traditional media(Daugherty, 2008; 33).

Furthermore Boyd and Ellison (2007) define social networks as “web-based services that allow individuals to (1) construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, (2) articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and (3) view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system” (Furthermore Boyd and Ellison 2007; 1). We will use this definition to set the foundation for understanding social media and the way users interact with these platforms. A few of the most popular social networking sites include the following: **MySpace, Facebook, Twitter, Whatsapp, Instagram, LinkedIn, Flickr, and YouTube.**

Below are comprehensive descriptions of various social media platforms as described in pictorial form. These diagrams capture all social media platforms available as at October 2014. Due to rapid evolution of the digital era, the listed platforms are to change with time.

Below is an extensive description of all the available social media platforms as at October 2014. The picture below lists the various platforms and shows how to engage them. For example, Facebook is a social network that allows you to communicate with friends and family on a one to one basis. Twitter on the other hand is used a microblog. It allows you to share a story using 140 words. An indepth analysis of these platforms will follow.

Fig 2: Description of all social media platforms as at October 2014.

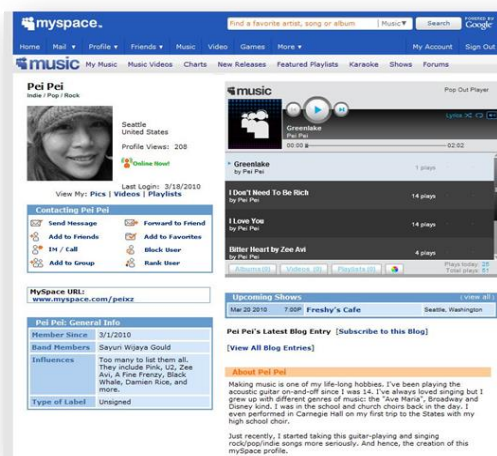


Source: World Wide Web (www.internetstatistics.com)

Further description of various social media platforms;

MySpace- This is a social networking site that allows its users to create webpages to interact with other users. Users of the service are able to create blogs, upload videos and photos, and design profiles to showcase their interests and talents. Myspace has provided a place for users to meet new friends and keep in touch with people across the world. The site has grown tremendously since its inception in 2003 and has even launched the careers of some music artists and actors. The site has received backlash from critics who believe that some users use the service to stalk and prey on other users. To combat this issue, Myspace has developed privacy settings to allow users to specify who they would like to view their profile and personal information. In 2005, the site was purchased by Rupert Murdoch's News Corporations and it operated under Fox Interactive Media. Below is screenshot showing an example of a my space profile page of one Pei Pei.

Fig 3: Screenshot showing an example of a MySpace profile page.



Source; World Wide Web; www.myspaceprofile/peipei

MySpace users access the site to search for music, old classmates, or new friends, creating a personal online community. Despite its initial growth in popularity, MySpace usage is in decline due to the introduction of Facebook. Facebook allows for more options such as sharing of photos and tagging of friends, which is relevant to younger teens.

Facebook - Facebook is a popular free social networking website that allows registered users to create profiles, upload photos and video, send messages and keep in touch with friends, family and colleagues. The site, which is available in 37 different languages. It has public features such as

- Marketplace - allows members to post, read and respond to classified ads.
- Groups - allows members who have common interests to find each other and interact.
- Events - allows members to publicize an event, invite guests and track who plans to attend.
- Pages - allows members to create and promote a public page built around a specific topic.
- Presence technology - allows members to see which contacts are online and chat.

Within each member's personal profile, there are several key networking components. The most popular is arguably the Wall, which is essentially a virtual bulletin board. Messages left on a member's Wall can be text, video or photos. Another popular component is the virtual Photo Album. Photos can be uploaded from the desktop or directly from a smartphone camera. There is no limitation on quantity, but Facebook staff will remove inappropriate or copyrighted images. An interactive album feature allows the member's contacts (who are called generically called "friends") to comment on each other's photos and identify (tag) people in the photos. Another

popular profile component is status updates, a microblogging feature that allows members to broadcast short Twitter-like announcements to their friends. All interactions are published in a news feed, which is distributed in real-time to the member's friends.

Facebook offers a range of privacy options to its members. A member can make all his communications visible to everyone, he can block specific connections or he can keep all his communications private. Members can choose whether or not to be searchable, decide which parts of their profile are public, decide what not to put in their news feed and determine exactly who can see their posts. For those members who wish to use Facebook to communicate privately, there is a message feature, which closely resembles email.

In Kenya, Facebook is one of the most popular social media platform because it was among the first to hit the country. Facebook is also popular because it is easily accessible and comes pre-installed in every phone. This platform is also free to use.

Kenyans have adapted to using social media including celebrities. Below is an example of a Facebook page profile of one Jeff Koinange, one of Kenya's most famous news anchors. He has personalized the page to his liking by using his images.

Fig 4: Screenshot of Jeff Koinange’s Facebook profile.



Source; World Wide Web <https://www.facebook.com/JeffKoinange.php>

Operating with a similar structure as MySpace, Jeff Koinange like other Facebook users can create a personalized profile with pictures and “friend” others. Facebook also created numerous applications that users can add to their profile, such as character fan pages, jokes of the day, or trivia and quizzes. A Live news feed on the user’s home page features what the users’ friends are doing, as well as news and advertising from other various sources.

Twitter - Twitter is a free social networking microblogging service that allows registered members to broadcast short posts called *tweets*. Twitter members can broadcast tweets and follow other users' tweets by using multiple platforms and devices. Tweets and replies to tweets can be sent by cell phone text message, desktop client or by posting at the Twitter.com website.

The default settings for Twitter are public. Unlike Facebook or LinkedIn, where members need to approve social connections, anyone can follow anyone on Twitter. To weave tweets into a conversation thread or connect them to a general topic, members can add hashtags to a keyword in their post. The hashtag, which acts like a meta tag, is expressed as #keyword.

Tweets, which may include hyperlinks, are limited to 140 characters, due to the constraints of Twitter's Short Message Service (SMS) delivery system. Because tweets can be delivered to followers in real time, they might seem like instant messages to the novice user. But unlike IMs that disappear when the user closes the application, tweets are also posted on the Twitter website. They are permanent, they are searchable and they are public. Anyone can search tweets on Twitter, whether they are a member or not.

Here is an example of how you, as an a company might use Twitter:

Let's say you are interested in learning more about cloud computing. First, you could search Twitter to see if anyone is talking (tweeting) about cloud computing. A quick search reveals that lots of Twitter members are talking about cloud computing.

Now you could do one of several things. You could simply keep tabs on cloud computing by returning and searching Twitter each day (not very efficient -- but effective) or you could join Twitter and follow people who have posted tweets that catch your interest. As a Twitter member, you can post your own tweets or you can just remain a follower and lurk.

Below is an example of a currently running Kenya Airways twitter page.

Fig 5: Screenshot showing an example of a Twitter Page. (Kenya Airways)



Source; World Wide Web; <https://twitter.com/kenyaairways>

The image shows how often Kenya airways communicates with its target market, how many followers they have and how many people they are following,

Users can follow other Twitter users to see what they are doing or search for topics to see a list of what all Twitter users are tweeting. The ability to search in real time has provided a valuable tool for advertisers and researchers when seeking to understand how the public feels about an product. Also companies are continuously taking advantage of trending topics generated by twitter trends in the form of Hash tags. For example the #kanyari310seed.

Instagram - Instagram is a fun and quirky way to share your life with friends through a series of pictures. Snap a photo with your mobile phone, and then choose a filter to transform the image into a memory to keep around forever. Instagram allows you to experience moments in your friends' lives through pictures as they happen. All photos are public by default which means they

are visible to anyone using Instagram or on the instagram.com website. You can choose to make your account private, then only people who follow you on Instagram will be able to see your photos.

Below is an example of an Instagram profile;

Fig 6; Screenshot showing an example of an Instagram profile page.



Source; World Wide Web; <http://instagram.com/myprofile/#>

This image is used to show how an Instagram profile page looks like and details some of the available user options. In Kenya, Instagram is a relatively new feature and it's taking some time to be adapted by users because it requires one to have a phone with a very good camera. Internet speeds should also be very high because for a user to view any of these images, the phone has to download all the photos fast.

LinkedIn - LinkedIn is a social networking site designed specifically for the business community. The goal of the site is to allow registered members to establish and document networks of people they know and trust professionally. Below is an example of a LinkedIn Page;

Fig 7: Screenshot showing an example of a LinkedIn profile page

The screenshot displays a LinkedIn profile for Mark White. At the top left, his name 'Mark White' is shown in bold, followed by his headline: '"The Blog Coach" - Social Media Specialist | Social Media Trainer | Business Blogging Consultant | LinkedIn Trainer' and his location 'Twickenham, United Kingdom'. To the right of the text is a profile picture of a man with short grey hair. Further right are two blue buttons: '+ Contact Mark White' and '+ Add Mark White to your network'. Below the header, the profile is divided into sections. The 'Current' section lists roles: 'Social Media Expert | Social Media Trainer | LinkedIn Trainer | LinkedIn Business Strategies at Social Media Directors', 'Business Blogging | Blog Marketing Consultant | LinkedIn Trainer | LinkedIn Expert at Better Business Blogging (Self-employed)'. The 'Past' section lists: 'Alliance Program Manager at Quadstone', 'Marketing and Sales Manager at QCT Group', and 'International Sales Manager at Psion'. The 'Education' section lists 'Cranfield School of Management' and 'Bradford University'. The 'Recommendations' section shows '15 recommendations' with a hand icon. The 'Connections' section shows '500+ connections' with a network icon. The 'Industry' is 'Marketing and Advertising'. The 'Websites' section lists 'Better Business Blogging', 'Social Media Directors', and 'LinkedIn Training'. On the right side, there is a section 'Public profile powered by: LinkedIn' with a subtext 'Create a public profile: Sign In or Join Now'. Below that is a box titled 'View Mark White's full profile:' containing three bullet points: 'See who you and Mark White know in common', 'Get introduced to Mark White', and 'Contact Mark White directly'. At the bottom of this box is a yellow button labeled 'View Full Profile'.

Source; World Wide Web; www.linkedin/profile.php

Members on linkedin use the application to advertise their skills to the world. As on the screenshot, Mark White is a social media expert and trainer. It also shows his experience on the relevant field and further allows a link to some of the work he has done. In this case, he has attached sample websites.

This network allows you to connect with colleagues, clients, and potential employers to accomplish professional goals. Users create a public profile, can send and receive professional recommendations, and join groups with those of similar interests.

A LinkedIn member's profile page, which emphasizes employment history and education, has professional network news feeds and a limited number of customizable modules. Basic membership for LinkedIn is free. Network members are called "connections." Unlike other free social networking sites like Facebook or Twitter, LinkedIn requires connections to have a pre-existing relationship.

With basic membership, a member can only establish connections with someone he has worked with, knows professionally (online or offline) or has gone to school with. Connections can be seen on a member's network, but the member is not allowed to contact them through LinkedIn without an introduction. Premium subscriptions can be purchased to provide members with better access to contacts in the LinkedIn database.

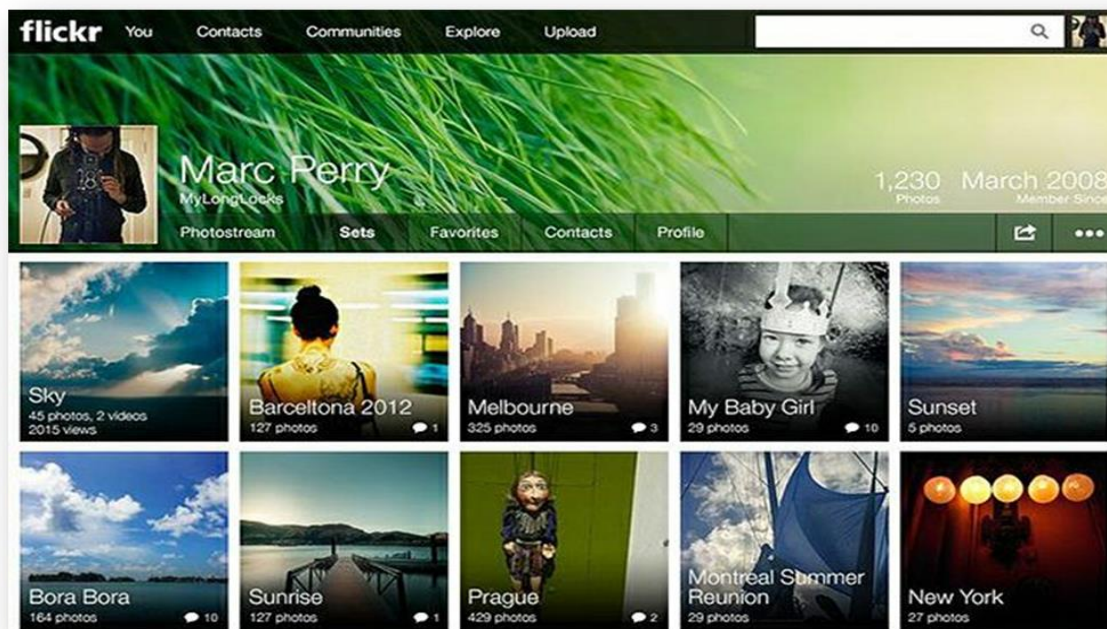
Flickr - Flickr is a website that allows you store, sort, search, and share your photos online. The free version of Flickr allows you to upload up to 20MB of photos each month (a paid version with a 2GB limit is available for \$24.95/year).

In addition to being a place to host your images, Flickr is also a community site. All images uploaded to Flickr that have not been marked as private can be searched using the tags (labels) associated with them. You can also search for and join groups to view photos from other users that match your interests.

Flickr has a section for photos that have been shared with a Creative Commons license. This is a type of license that allows teachers to use images found on Flickr in classroom projects as long as they cite the person who took the picture (the conditions of use will vary depending on the type of Creative Commons license).

Below is an example of a flickr profile page.

Fig 8: Screenshot showing an example of a flickr homepage

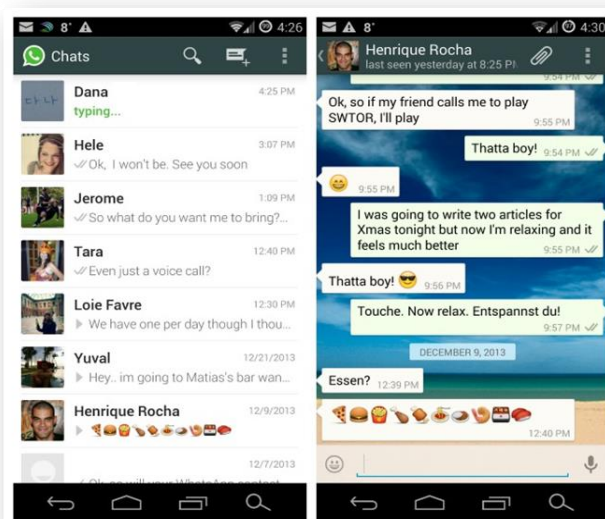


Source; www.flickr.com/profile.php

On this screenshot, you can see the various features on flickr including how users can upload, edit, organize, and share photos. Through the creation of a profile, users can keep in touch with family and friends through their digital photos. In addition, many use this service as a web-hosting database for pictures for their website or personal blog. In Kenya, this feature has not yet become popular because not many people have access to fast internet that is required to upload the images.

WhatsApp - WhatsApp Messenger is a cross-platform instant messaging application that allows iPhone, BlackBerry, Android, Windows Phone and Nokia smartphone users to exchange text, image, video and audio messages for free.

WhatsApp is especially popular with end users who do not have unlimited text messaging. In addition to basic messaging, WhatsApp provides group chat and location sharing options. Below is an example of a WhatApp profile page.

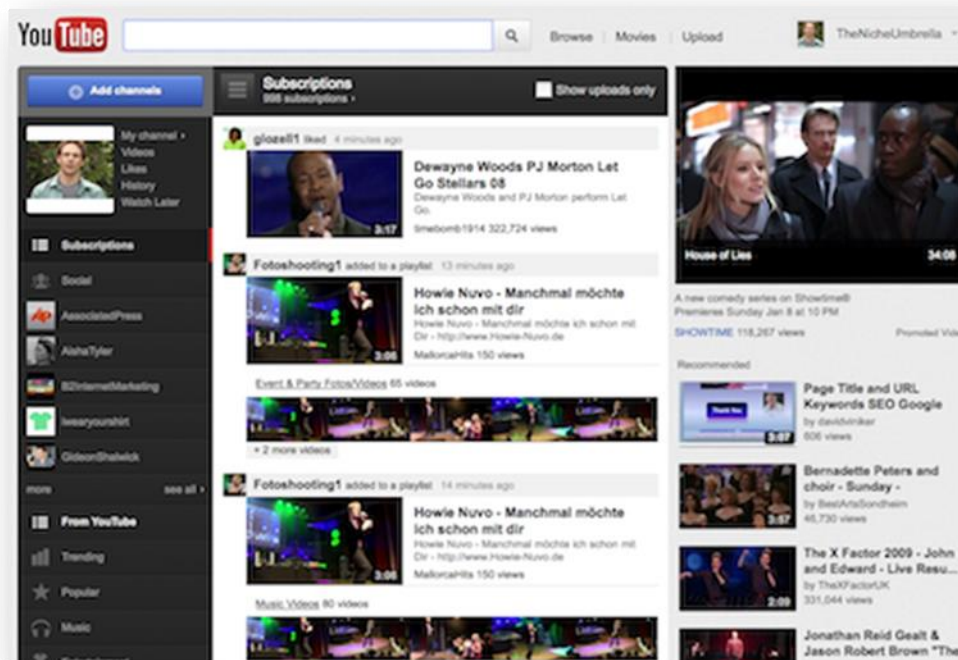


Source; World Wide Web; www.whatsapp.com/profile.php

On this screenshot, you are able to see how WhatsApp users can create groups, send each other unlimited images, video and audio media messages. In Kenya, this application is popular because it allows you to exchange messages without having to pay for SMS.

YouTube - YouTube is the number one website for videos

(<http://www.youtube.com/advertise>).



Source; World Wide Web; www.youtube.com/profile.php

On this screenshot you can see how users use youtube to watch videos or create their own, the database contains numerous videos on any topic. While the site began with user-generated content, it now offers numerous types of videos including commercial videos. In Kenya,

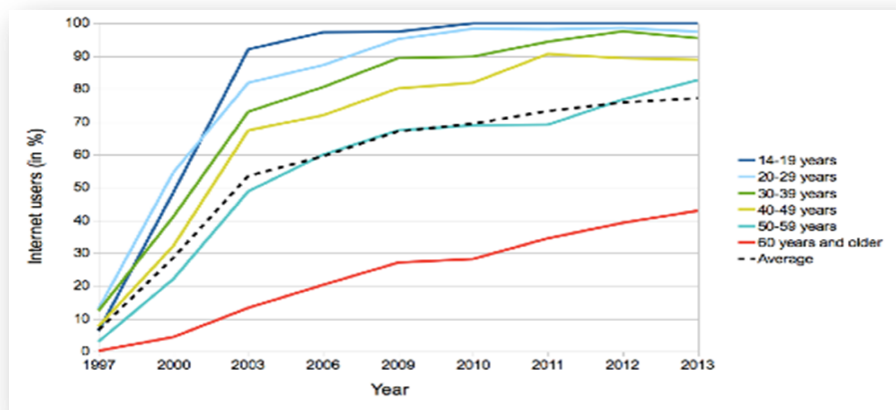
companies are using it to upload their advertisements incase their consumers would like to watch them over and over again.

1.1.3 Evolution from Mainstream Media to Social media.

Within the last 15 years, people not only in Kenya but all over the world have been able to access the internet at a rapidly growing rate across all age group and have therefore started using social media platforms as a medium to communicate shop and gather information about relevant topics.

The graph below shows the evolution and adaption of internet usage from 1997 – 2013 among different age groups in Kenya.

Fig 9; Graph showing the evolution and adaption of Internet Usage in Kenya among different age groups.



Source: Miniwatts Marketing Group, 01.2008 (adapted from www.internetworldstats.com)

On this image, you can see how different age groups have adapted to using the internet over the years with teenagers between the age of 14 and 19 being the quickest to adapt.

Social media is different from traditional or industrial media in many ways. For example with Print media (e.g. newspapers and magazines) communication may only be consumed while in the physical possession of a reader. Television may only be watched when someone is sitting in front of it. In the digital world, content is not only free from such constraints, but may also be copied and repeatedly shared at little (if any) cost and without any degradation in quality. This capability for infinite reproduction demolishes the traditional business model of making money by selling duplicated content (Mulhern, 2009; 54).

As consumers, we are also accustomed to seeing news, entertainment, and advertising bundled together into neat packages for our viewing pleasure. However, a digital infrastructure allows these individual pieces to become unattached. For example, a news story may be unbundled from a specific media (e.g. newspaper) and delivered separately. As such, an advertisement may be packaged with the story without ever being attached to a newspaper. Therefore, one need not buy an entire newspaper for one story and still be exposed to the advertisement. This approach allows advertisements to become modular and associated with pieces of information which are of interest to specific customers. Customers benefit because they no longer have to comb through strenuous material in order to reach the content in which they are interested (Mulhern, 2009; 56). Customers can now choose what to read what they want, when they want and discredit the rest.

While the differences between traditional advertising and the new world of digital communications are numerous, none is greater than that between the concept of communications focusing upon the delivery of messages via media channels and that of communications specifically designed to facilitate and manage the connections between information (products) and people. Naturally, as in traditional advertising, creative content remains at the center of these communications. In Kenya for example, the most memorable media campaigns on traditional

media are those that grabbed and maintained our interest for example Toss Radio Advert that talked about a Secondary student (Form 1) whose uniform has faded so much that the principal thought he was in Form 4. Another example was the Pesa Pap campaign by Family Bank.

However, with the advent of social media, advertising success is now based on about simple advertisement placement. The way you position your adverts is now more important than the content of the advert. For example, companies in Social media professionals have learned the importance of ridding on pre-existing viral messages as advertising tools i.e. when *#babawhileyouwereaway* campaign went viral, (as seen on the screen shot below) Safaricom rode on the hash tag by stating “*#babawhileyouwereaway* we paid Anglo-leasing Ksh 1,4 Bn using Mpesa” which had people sharing the message all over the country for free.

Fig 10: Screenshot showing how Safaricom took advantage of a pre-existing hash tag to get free coverage on social media



Source; Ministry of Laughter and Creativity Facebook page, 01.2013 (adapted from www.facebook.com/ministryoflaughter)

On the screenshot, you can see how Safaricom took advantage of a trending topic to promote Mpesa- its mobile money platform.

1.1.4 Significance of using advertisements on Social media in Kenya.

We have looked at how mainstream media advertising differs from social media advertising. Why is it important to find the perfect way to communicate using social media in Kenya? As noted earlier, Kenya like the rest of the world is adapting to this new advertising platform; social media. This revolution may pose significant challenges to those media companies, agencies, and brand marketers in Kenya who have focused their efforts on sending advertisements to target audiences through traditional media channels without investing the time and effort to learn how to effectively communicate on with their target market social media.

These marketing professionals in Kenya should also understand the importance of social media to their companies. Social media can make or break a brand. (Foux, 2006; 19) suggests Social media is perceived by customers as a more trustworthy source of information regarding products and services than communications generated by organizations transmitted via the traditional elements of the promotion mix. (Mangold & Faulds, 2009; 47) argue that marketing managers should comprise social media in the communication mix when developing and executing their Integrated Marketing Communication strategies and they presented the social media as a new hybrid element of promotion mix. (Mohan Nair, 2011; 89) takes social media as a complex marriage of sociology and technology that cannot be underestimated in its impact to an organizations marketing communications, choice as to when to engage, how to manage and measure, and whether to lead or to follow is complex but not an impossible task. These cannot be answered simply by one formula because the context and the market dynamics are strong

variables in these decisions. Even though the interest for social media is huge, few companies understand what the term —social media can mean to their businesses (Cooke, 2008; 56).

It can be thus concluded that social networking sites are a form of social media. The increasing dependence on technology for basic communication highlights the importance of analyzing how these networking sites are affecting daily processes. Anyone including teens and young adults, women, men, affluent consumers, and older individuals can join a social network site. Once registered the person can begin to socialize and create his/her own network of friends with common interests or goals. Sites like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Whatsapp, Instagram, and LinkedIn are influencing the way users establish, maintain and cultivate a range of social relationships, from close friendships to casual acquaintances. Consumers today want to be more informed about products before they make the purchase. Most importantly, social networks are extremely capable of informing and influencing purchase decisions, as many users now trust their peer opinions more than the marketing strategists. Customers now have the power to talk back at the brand and broadcast their opinions of the brand (Casteleyn, 2009; 12). Numerous studies indicate an increase in social network usage (Goldsborough, 2009; { 4). However not so many Social media Marketing Companies/professionals, specifically in Kenya, have studied the art of communicating with their target effectively.

In conclusion, most marketing professionals in Kenya, are required to have credentials that relate to studying a business degree. Ideally this should theoretically be enough credentials to run a Sales and Marketing department. As part of the business degree curriculum, the professionals learn how consumers behave, how to effectively advertise to the said consumers, their cognitive process when making purchasing decision among other. However, we have not yet incorporated

in the curriculum anything on Social media. With that said, social media practitioners lack the critical knowledge on how to communicate with their target market effectively on social media. Therefore this study will first seek to distinguish between how advertising is effected on mainstream media in comparison to Social media in Kenya. Then, the paper will act as the critical bridge between the consumer of social media and products/services to various companies here in Kenya.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The increased fragmentation of media and customers, as well as the revolution in mass communication by the new communication channels internet and mobile communication technologies has created the need for a new approach to advertising through social media is effective and creates consistency of communication messages sent towards various audiences.

Despite the acknowledged impact of the internet on advertising, very few studies have investigated the effectiveness of social media as an advertising tool. (Vollmer and Precourt 2008, 19), addressed customers are turning away from the traditional sources of advertising, such as radio and television, and that they consistently insist on more control over their media consumption. (Lindberg, Nyman & Landin, 2010; 23), examined how to implement and evaluate an online channel extension through Social media, which compares and contrasts conventional advertising practices with social media marketing in the context of micro firms and then suggests these micro firms as which tools are more suitable for them.

(Wikström & Wigmo, 2010; 70) in their research- social media as marketing tool analyze and explore how companies can use social media to promote themselves and transform their

businesses to consumer relationship focused. (Quiroga & Kamila, 2010; 59) in their research- Marketing and Facebook, describe how fashion companies promote themselves on social media platforms such as Facebook. Considering the lacks and gaps on a general level, there is a lack of quantitative (empirical) studies regarding effectiveness of using social media as an advertising tool.

Looking on a business perspective, it goes without saying that Social media Marketing has offered a large variety of new opportunities for companies to promote their brand, products and services. Thanks to the personal autonomy and freedom that Internet offers, people are actively connecting with each other and talking about their experiences, sharing their opinions about products and services they have tested or even just heard about. However, it seems still unclear the most effective way to communicate with Kenyans on social media to attain maximum results.

Therefore, in this Master thesis report, I will aim at improving the understanding of the business benefits of Social media Marketing and the most effective way to utilize social media platform as an advertising tool.

As a consequence, the problem statement of this report will be defined as following:

Social media marketing: What is the most effective way of using social media as an advertising tool?

In order to provide understanding and answers to this issue, the report will start by presenting Social media and its relation to Marketing, defining the terms and their features. Then, on the one hand, the theoretical analysis will use a wide literature review to discuss the evolution of Social media Marketing, explaining why every business should have their Social media sites and how to effectively use them as advertisement tools. On the other hand, the empirical analysis will

examine the main marketing techniques used by companies on the Social media channels, analyzing how Kenyan businesses should develop their Social media Sites and how they can effectively communicate with the Kenyan market to receive maximum results.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study is to establish the effective ways of using social media as an advertising tool. The specific objectives are;

- 1) To establish the general level of awareness on the importance of social media as an advertising tool in various companies in Kenya.
- 2) To find out the consumption habits of advertisements by the general public on social media.
- 3) To examine the effectiveness of social media advertisements in influencing buying decisions.

1.4 Research Questions

- 1) What is the general level of awareness on the importance of social media as an advertising tool by companies in Kenya.
- 2) What are the consumption habits of advertisements by the general public on social media?

- 3) How effective are social media advertisements in influencing buying decisions among Kenyans?

1.5 Justification of the Study

Given the absence of research on the effective ways of using social media in Kenya for advertising, this report seeks to analyze the different benefits encountered by businesses if and when they implement Social media marketing strategies effectively. The study will further reveal how to go about communicating to a company's target audience effectively using the social media as an advertising tool.

This research will also aim to fill the intellectual gap brought about by lack of incorporation of Social media as a major course in the theoretical framework of any business degree in Kenya. The research will do this by describing how advertising on traditional media is different from doing it on social media (which is what many universities in Kenya are currently focusing on) therefore emphasizing the importance of incorporating social media as part of the curriculum. It will go further and act as a guiding tool for any social media professional in Kenya who wants to excel in their field by revealing critical information on how they can use social media as an advertising tool.

The main benefits presented and described by the theoretical analysis of this research will be brand exposure, targeted traffic, leads generation, but also, market insights, including market research and competitor monitoring. Furthermore, the customer interaction, which takes into

account customer service and their feedbacks, as well as the costless nature of Social media marketing, will be detailed as important benefits of using social media as a marketing platform.

Moreover, the report will implement an empirical analysis of the various Social media Channels, presenting each of the different types of Social media platforms, how they work, how Kenyans have adapted the said social media channels, their principal actors and their main features, looking at the advantages for businesses. It will then tap on how to use the said social media platforms effectively to communicate with target audience. Therefore, we will take a closer look at social networking sites such as Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter.

This study also seeks to revolutionize how the social media industry works in Kenya, by providing critical solutions on how to engage with a company's potential target market, when to engage the said target market and the tone/language to use when engaging them. Imagine knowing exactly when your target market engages in social media and how to grab their attention without fail! The research aims to find the perfect way communicate using social media, eliminating any chances of wastage in terms of time and revenue on behalf of companies.

The study will establish the effective ways of using social media as an advertising tool. The research strives to find out which of the various social media platforms lists previously is the most effective when it comes to advertising in Kenya. This will improve knowledge on how the social media industry works in Kenya, striving to change government policies.

We will also establish new ideas of communicating to the masses using social media platforms that are not only effective but talk to the target market directly and using their own language. This will revolutionize how various companies communicate with the masses using social media

social media hence reducing wastage and gaining maximum results from their advertisement on social media.

This study will find how social media can be incorporated into advertising/marketing mix of an organization. This understanding helps organizations to focus on how to incorporate social media into integrated advertising, by integrating perspective of organization, intermediaries (social media marketing experts and agencies) and customers on social media characteristics that are important for organization in incorporating social media to their integrated advertising strategy.

The research also strives to gain critical understanding on how Kenyans receive and digest advertisements on social media. This can be further exploited to gain maximum results with every advertising communication done by various companies in Kenya.

This study will provide new insight into how and why advertising practitioners use social media for marketing and communications purposes. To better understand advertisers' strategic motivations, I will review two advertising theories. The first theory, (Lavidge and Steiner's hierarchy of effects advertising model, 1961: 67), comes from advertising literature on how advertising works. This literature review will first explore the hierarchy's potential to predict consumer purchase decisions and its application to social media as an advertising medium. Next, The study will examine existing research on a more modern advertising theory, (Taylor's Six-Segment Strategy Wheel, 1999: 45). This theory explores a contemporary understanding of consumer motivations and creates a practical model for advertising practitioners to develop message strategies.

1.6 Conclusion

The foregoing discussion on social media and advertising indicates a research gap that need to be addressed by undertaking a study on the effective ways of using social media as an advertising tool. The next chapter will look at various literature relevant to the study with the aim of exploring further into the study.

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CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

INTRODUCTION

This study will provide new insight into how and why advertising practitioners use social media for advertising purposes. To better understand advertisers' strategic motivations, the study will review two advertising theories. The first theory, (Lavidge and Steiner's hierarchy of effects advertising model 1961; 67), comes from advertising literature on how advertising works. This literature review will first explore the hierarchy's potential to predict consumer purchase decisions and its application to social media as an advertising medium. Next, the study will examine existing research on a more modern advertising theory, (Taylor's Six-Segment Strategy Wheel 1999; 45). This theory explores a contemporary understanding of consumer motivations and creates a practical model for advertising practitioners to develop message strategies.

2.1 Social media

Social networks are an increasingly powerful force in mediated communication. However, research conducted to date has been primarily exploratory. (Goldsborough 2009; 19) examined several media trends that the JWT advertising agency reported in its annual forecast. One of the foremost conclusions is the predicted decline of e-mail usage, which JWT attributes to younger peoples preference for text messaging and communicating through social networks. In addition, the agency cites the increasing number of social networking sites, introduction of professional social networking sites such as LinkedIn, and increase in micro-blogging using programs such as Twitter.

The evolution of social networks allows for personalized interactions between advertisers and consumers. Although social networks were first adopted by teenagers, the growing populations of 21- to 30-year-olds and white-collar professionals use them, which would demonstrate the applicability of social networks to everyday life (Kim, 2008: 6). This growing trend has vast implications for advertisers and executives. However, without adequate knowledge of the effectiveness of these platforms, advertisers lose chances to create valuable interactions with consumers.

Existing research concerning social networks remains mostly exploratory and focuses on impression management, friendship performance, networks and network structure, online/offline connections, and privacy issues (Boyd & Ellison, 2007; 93). Little research has directly examined the applicability of social media for advertising purposes. This area of advertising research requires further examination to understand the effectiveness of social media programs on consumers.

(Daugherty, Eastin, and Bright 2008; 24) investigated consumers' motivations for creating social media sites such as MySpace, Facebook, YouTube, Flickr, and Twitter. Implementing an exploratory study with an online survey, the researchers analyzed user attitudes in regard to User Generated Content (UGC). The authors define UGC for the purposes of their experiment as, "media content created or produced by the general public rather than by paid professionals and primarily distributed on the Internet" (Daugherty, Eastin, and Bright, 2008; 22). Results indicated consumers increased the amount of social media usage as their attitudes toward social media improved.

With the advances in Internet capabilities and social networking sites, Internet users engage in more consumer-to-consumer content sharing. This development has led to the creation of

personalized content recommendations through sites. Applying information overload and uses and gratifications theory, (Liang, Lai, and Ku, 2006: 115) suggested personalized content services increase user satisfaction when employed appropriately. They suggested providing content recommendations when users need specific information, as opposed to when consumers look at general websites.

Businesses are already creating profiles and branding their products on social media sites in an effort to reach consumers (Kuhn & Burns, 2008; 76). Within MySpace, (Kuhn & Burns, 2008; 77) found brands present advertising, multimedia content and other features to allow consumer interactions with their brand. Many companies also connect offline and online promotions through these branded profiles, including exclusive online promotional offers to increase profile traffic.

2.2 Social media as advertising strategy

In literature social networks have been described as "an internet-facilitated and consumer driven movement of networks, content and knowledge" built on web-based media tools that enable individuals to connect online. Social media, the platform for social networks, are not just new technology - but enablers of a fundamental marketing strategy shift in how organizations and customers relate to each other. (Angel & Sexsmith, 2009; 68) By social media, also called consumer-generated media, we can consider blogs and micro-blogs (like Twitter and others), videos, review boards, online forums and other social channels. (Baker, 2009: 24) Social networking sites can offer a unified communications platform where users have the capability of interacting with others on a simultaneous basis. (Barnes N. D. & Barnes F. R., 2009: 74)

Conventional channels of marketing are gradually being dissolved or assimilated into a global network fuelled by the Internet. (Ranchhod, 2004; 34)

The current consensus on development of communications is based on a shared vision of contemporary market and technological developments. (Marsden & Tambini, 2005; 9). These directions have made it favorable for online-based communication to grow. At the same time consumers' behaviors have changed towards more demanding and impulsive, companies have to start thinking new ways to communicate their offerings. Therefore mainstream corporate communication is moving away from one-way sales messages handed down to mass audiences by hierarchical organizations having exclusive ownership of information. (Angel & Sexsmith, 2009; 41) Little by little this has started to become apparent for today's marketers - social networkers want to talk about consumer brands and engage to company's communication. As consumers, they feel encouraged to be more open, live more spontaneously, and hold more immediate notions of trust and value. (Angel & Sexsmith, 2009; 43)

Therefore a new, vital source of data about consumers comes directly from consumers themselves. This data is the actual thoughts and comments of consumers, expressed in social media. As most of the current and potential customers are online, they are engaged with social or consumer-generated media. They are discussing the brands and products they love and the brands and products they hate. They have influence and power to affect the company and its product sales. Winning companies are developing strategies and tactics to listen to, learn from, analyze, understand and engage with this powerful new channel. (Baker, 2009; 24)

Getting into corporate social networking often starts with a series of market-oriented questions. How well do we understand our customers' needs? How good are our insights into the way our customers regard and connect with our brand? How and when can we engage our customers and

enlist them as collaborators? How innovative, differentiated, and resilient is our brand in these commoditized and competitive times? How can our employees guide us through this maze? (Angel & Sexsmith, 2009; 45).

Many managers today are uncertain about what social networking really means, how it fits their business strategy, and most importantly, how they can define its practical value to the business. According to the January 2009 Gauge survey, less than 20 percent of CEOs and marketing decision makers say that social networking is likely to attract customers who are aware of their brand but normally don't buy it. This suggests a lack of understanding of the powerful market and cultural changes that new media has brought about. The decision makers need to understand social networking to help the rest of the organization access the best information on it. (Angel & Sexsmith, 2009; 6)

In the new online environment, people in charge of communications have to understand the idea that there is no local market or territory any more. We work and live in a global market and information community where we must have open and continual conversation with our consumers and partners as a group and individually. There is no clear cut ROI but we can say that the dangers of ignoring these communities are obvious. The companies that ignore the effects of social networks are missing a golden opportunity to get personal inputs on the person's image of the company, why the individual bought the product/service, what they like/dislike and what they feel should be improved. (Marken, 2008; 19).

2.3.1 Hierarchy of Effects

The hierarchy of effects sets the foundation for the exploration of consumer thought processes and is one of the main theories used to explain how we believe advertising works. (Lavidge and

Steiner 1961; 32) introduced the hierarchy of effects in their theoretical essay exploring the influences on consumer decision-making. This theory, which acts as a consumer model of advertising, introduced the concept that advertising can be a long-term process, countering the prevailing opinion that all advertising should incite immediate action from the consumer to be successful.

The six steps of the hierarchy include awareness, knowledge, liking, preference, conviction, and purchase. The researchers recognized that individuals travel through the steps at differing speeds depending on the level of involvement with the product and individual motivation, among other factors. They believed understanding the consumer's decision-making process allowed advertisers to construct more persuasive messages.

The hierarchy of effects theory evolved from the basic AIDA model, another consumer decision-making model with the steps of attention, interest, desire, and action. Most researchers attribute the AIDA model to E. St. Elmo Lewis, who created it as a personal selling model in the early 1900s (Strong, 1925; 92). The AIDA model became one of the first major advertising theories to address the consumer's decision-making process in response to advertising. The cognitive, affective, and cognitive psychology model also influenced (Lavidge and Steiner's, 1961; 35) creation of the hierarchy. This psychology model described the behavioral dimensions of decision-making, suggesting individuals first think, then feel, and finally act when influenced by stimuli.

During the 1960s, numerous other models emerged under similar influences as (Lavidge and Steiner's, 1961; 35) hierarchy of effects. The creation of new models showed advertising researchers' growing interest in the cognitive processes of consumers, mirroring psychological and behavioral advances at the time. (Colley, 1961; 29) developed the DAGMAR model, which

stands for defining advertising goals for measured advertising results. The DAGMAR model focused on the four steps of awareness, comprehension, conviction, and action. Similarly, (Wolfe, Brown, and Thompson, 1962; 44) created a five-step hierarchy, including awareness, acceptance, preference, intention to buy, and provocation of sale. While the hierarchies contained varying numbers of steps and names, all of the models followed the basic AIDA model.

Although not the first consumer decision-making model, (Lavidge and Steiner's, 1961; 36) hierarchy of effects proved to be one of the most influential. The researchers' attempt to understand the cognitive processes of the consumer demonstrated a desire to incorporate scientific methods into the industry. The hierarchy of effects significantly influenced advertising literature for many decades after its creation.

Several researchers have recently used the hierarchy of effects theory as a background for their advertising research. (Vakratsas and Ambler, 1999; 23) studied over 250 journal articles that examined how advertising affects consumers and the hierarchies associated with the consumer decision-making process. Through taxonomy of the studies, the authors classified the research into seven models of how advertising works: market response, cognitive information, pure effect, persuasive hierarchy, low involvement hierarchy, integrative, and hierarchy-free. Within the persuasive hierarchy category, the researchers included all models following the cognition, affect, and behavior model, including the AIDA model, the hierarchy of effects theory, and the innovation-adoption model (Rogers, 1962; 49).

In the persuasive hierarchy category, (Vakratsas and Ambler, 1999; 26) found five main areas of research that stemmed from the original models. These areas of research included the following: brand attitude formation; ad likeability and attitude toward the ad; the effects of message

repetition on awareness, recall, and attitude formation; attitude-behavior consistency; and the sequence of intermediate effects. The majority of the persuasive hierarchy research contained an analysis of the effectiveness of the hierarchy models or of the individual steps within the hierarchies.

Through their analysis of these hierarchies, (Vakratsas and Ambler, 1999; 28) developed several conclusions. First, emotions, as well as past beliefs, affect a person's attitude toward a brand. Second, ad likeability and brand preference are highly correlated. Third, advertisers can maintain recall and attitudes using a series of slightly different advertisements within a product campaign.

2.3.2 Lavidge and Steiner's (1961) hierarchy of effects.

Before Vakratsas and Ambler's (1999) study, many researchers also criticized the hierarchy of effects. (Wicker, 1969; 67) found through a review of research that a very low correlation actually existed between attitude and overt behavior. Due to the low correlation, he urged social scientists to be more empirical when measuring these variables. He provided several suggestions for future research topics, such as the relationship between verbal behavior and overt behavior, and an analysis of socially-significant attitudes, which he found did not always correlate to behavior. Overall, he noted a need for more research concerning the connection between attitudes and behaviors.

Two studies directly examined the link between attitude and behavior in regards to the hierarchy of effects (Batra and Vanhonacker, 1986; Zinkhan and Fornell, 1989) however, results were inconclusive. (Zinkhan and Fornell, 1989; 77) conducted an experiment with print ads in both high and low involvement situations. While they found the hierarchy of effects to be mildly

predictive of behavior, they created a new model that included indirect and direct effects. The researchers believed their modified version of the hierarchy produced results that were more predictable.

2.3.3 Applications of the Hierarchy

Numerous industries adapted the hierarchy of effects theory into their research, such as models for contest participation, movie marketing, health campaign promotion, and new media usage. (Ward and Hill, 1991; 41) created a model describing the causes and consequences of promotional game participation based on the hierarchy of effects theory. Using the stages of cognition, affect, and behavior, (Ward and Hill, 1991; 41) model showed how personal characteristics, (e.g., demographics, personality, beliefs, past experiences with promotional games) influenced the individual's extrinsic and intrinsic desire to participate.

Building on the hierarchy of effects, (Smith 1993; 39) investigated the effect of product trial on the consumer decision-making process by examining the effect of mediating positive and negative reactions to product trials. Using an experimental design, (Smith 1993; 40) manipulated the information source, the information sequence, and the favorability of the trial. Results indicated advertising reduced the effect of a negative product trial, especially when the advertising appeared before the product trial. However, when the negative product trial occurred before exposure to advertising, cognitive evaluations resulted, causing a more negative attitude. In addition, the effect of the ad had less of an effect on brand attitude if seen after product trial. Using the hierarchy of effects as the basis for consumer decision-making, (Smith 1993; 42) concluded that product trial influenced the stages of liking and preference.

Applying the hierarchy to the movie industry, (Zufryden, 1996; 7) developed a model that described the process consumers go through when choosing a film to attend. The marketing planning model explained the effects of advertising on overall box office revenue. The model involved three stages: advertising increased awareness of a new film; awareness affected intent to see the film; and intent to see a new film affected purchase of movie tickets and overall box office revenue. Other variables also influenced the process, including word of mouth, advertising saturation, memory decay, film characteristics, and distribution level and timing of film.

In a more recent study, (Adams, 2006; 33) created the communicator-based hierarchy of effects using (Lavidge and Steiner's, 1961; 44) theory. The study hoped to create a quantitative method to design a hierarchy of brand loyalty. Using 206 website managers and their niche newspaper websites as the sample, the exploratory study sought to find efficient ways to create brand loyalty for the newspaper sites. The communicator-based hierarchy demonstrated the steps an online marketer went through to incite awareness through brand loyalty to create loyal customers. Ultimately, (Adams 2006; 45) found respondents were more interested in short-term goals, such as increasing revenue, as opposed to long-term goals, such as gaining brand loyalty. The potential significance of the model, however, demonstrates a need for future researchers to apply the hierarchy of effects to other populations and industries.

2.3.4 The Modern Hierarchy of Effects

Many question if the hierarchy of effects still applies to modern culture. With advances in technology and the increase of media availability and clutter, consumers live in a vastly different world than when the hierarchy of effects originated. In fact, according to (Briggs and Stuart,

2006; 4), “the Internet is completely reshaping consumers” media habits and buying preferences and has been nothing short of the catalyst for the reorientation of marketing”

Emphasizing the importance of measurement, these researchers analyzed the marketing efforts of over 30 top companies including Ford, Johnson & Johnson, McDonalds, Proctor & Gamble, and Volkswagen. Their research methodology, reviewed by the Advertising Research Foundation (ARF), included use of experiments, online surveys, and telephone surveys where online surveys were not applicable. Their goal was to create a method to quickly measure campaign effectiveness and return on investment (ROI).

The study’s results found a different consumer culture than depicted in traditional advertising theory. While many advertising theories rely on active processing of the message, (Briggs and Stuart, 2006; 56) found consumers mostly engage in low attention processing. However, this is not necessarily harmful because, despite low attention, the message can still affect attitudes and behavior. In an updated version of the hierarchy, the researchers emphasized the importance of creating meaningful messages in the early stages of the hierarchy because, “causing a change in the perception of the brand ... is part of the chain of events that leads to sales” (p. 141).

Overall, (Briggs and Stuart, 2006; 58) applied this consumer model of advertising to the modern consumer. They stressed the need to create clear, straightforward messaging because the progression of consumers through the hierarchy is not definite and the consumer is constantly faced with advertising clutter, especially online. With the vast number of messages consumers receive daily, advertisers must carefully construct their messages if they want their advertising to result in purchases. While emerging media channels, such as social networks, may allow advertisers the opportunity to reach consumers in new ways, the effectiveness of these new message vehicles has yet to be determined.

2.3.5 Six-Segment Strategy Wheel

A more recent consumer theory used by advertisers, Taylor's six-segment strategy wheel explains consumer motivations for making different types of purchase decisions (1999). This strategy wheel combined research from Carrey's (1975) strategy wheel, Kilter's (1965) consumer response theories, and Vaughn's (1980) FCB grid. The six-segment strategy wheel helped bridge existing research on how advertising works with modern consumer behavior research. (Carey 1975; 11) introduced the first communication strategy wheel, which consisted of two segments: a transmission view and a ritual view. These two segments represented the rational and emotional communication approaches. In this wheel, the transmission approach described the functional, informational side of communication, whereas the ritual approach described the emotional, dramatic side of communication.

Another influential body of work stemmed from four of (Kilter's, 1965; 19) consumer response theories. The first theory, the Marshallian Economic Model, described rational, economic-based purchase decisions. The Pavlovian Learning Model described consumers' needs or motives for a purchase. In this model, (Kilter's, 1965; 12) believed that advertising acted as a cue that could elicit a response, or a purchase from consumers. His next theory, the Freudian Psychoanalytic Model, identified the symbolic motivations consumers received from product messages, and the Veblenian Social-Psychological Model asserted that outside social influences, such as the culture or reference groups of an individual, influence consumer purchase decisions.

While (Kilter's, 1965; 25) research was a major breakthrough in consumer behavior, another significant contribution to consumer behavior literature came from Richard Vaughn of the Foote, Cone, and Belding advertising agency. First introduced in 1980, the FCB grid helped convert

academic literature into a more practical application for advertising practitioners. This grid highlighted the finding that thinking moderates some behaviors while emotions moderate others. The FCB grid had four quadrants designed to help advertisers create strategies for the products found within each quadrant: informative, affective, habitual, and satisfaction. Practical in nature, this grid helped advertisers consider different motivators for products.

Based on economic and informational needs, quadrant one was the high involvement, thinking informative quadrant. Products in this category, such as cars or home furnishings, followed the traditional LEARN-FEEL-DO decision sequence. Quadrant two, the affective quadrant, represented those purchases based on high involvement and emotions. These purchase decisions were related to a person's self-esteem or ego, such as jewelry or fashion. Based on low involvement, thinking decisions, quadrant three, the habitual quadrant, represented those purchases that were routine, such as food or household items. (Vaughn, 1980; 82) felt advertisers should seek to create habit-forming purchase tendencies for these items. Finally, quadrant four represented low involvement, feeling products. This self-satisfaction quadrant consisted of items such as beer, cigarettes, and candy. Cumulatively, the four quadrants of the FCB grid helped advertisers match products with specific messaging strategies to create effective advertising.

While the FCB grid was a useful resource for advertising practitioners, it had limitations. With the intention to improve the FCB grid and address its criticisms, Taylor introduced the six segment strategy wheel in 1999. Also incorporating (Carrey's, 1975; 34) strategy wheel, (Taylor, 1999: 32) presented his six-segment model as existing within two views, the transmission and ritual. Similar to the FCB grid presented by Vaughn (1980), Taylor (1999) displayed more important decisions, both rational and emotional, at the top of the wheel and less

important decisions at the bottom of the wheel. The first segment on the ritual side of the wheel, known as ego, represented the idea of the Freudian psychoanalytic model from (Kotler, 1965; 29). This segment acknowledged that some purchase decisions resulted from individuals' need to express their identity and link certain product attributes to their identity.

Taylor derived the second segment, the social segment, from (Kotler, 1965; 36) Veblenian social-psychological model, which acknowledged that some consumers make product purchases with the intention of gaining social approval and acceptance. Next, segment three, known as the sensory segment, described the motivations for purchasing low involvement, feeling products that stimulate the five senses: taste, sight, hearing, touch, or smell. Taylor believed these purchase decisions were encouraged through message appeals for "pleasurable moments."

The second half of Taylor's six-segment strategy wheel represented (Carrey's, 1975; 23) transmission view, which focused on thinking purchases. Segment four, the routine segment, represented ideas from (Kotler, 1965; 44) Pavlovian Learning Model. This segment represented low involvement, thinking purchases that usually resulted in habitual purchases based on previous experience. Segment five, acute need, acknowledged consumers' need for information but also their scarcity of time. Taylor felt these purchase decisions relied on the availability and familiarity of product options.

Finally, segment six, the rational segment, resulted from (Kotler, 1965; 51) Marshallian Economic Model. For these purchase decisions, consumers needed high amounts of information, and their decisions were economic-based and rational. All together, these six segments made up Taylor's strategy wheel which admittedly does not account for all purchase decisions. However, this model effectively combined the existing literature about message strategy into a single, workable model that professionals could easily incorporate into advertising practice. The Six-

Segment Strategy Wheel (Taylor, 1999; 26) is important because it attempts to modernize the traditional consumer model of the hierarchy of effects, while also providing a practical tool for advertising practitioners. By explaining the different processes consumers can go through before making a purchase, the model helps advertising practitioners generate message strategies based on consumer motivations. In essence, this model represents a combined model representing how academics and advertising practitioners believe advertising works.

This theory is especially important to this study, which seeks to understand the opinions and strategies of advertising practitioners when using social media for marketing and communications. After examining their perceptions, one can then determine if practitioners adhere to traditional advertising theory when creating social media messages.

2.4 Conclusion

Almost every company will have a different combination of customers, objectives, strategies, and technologies. Overall approaches to social media advertising are and should be different. Nevertheless, every company should strive to integrate their message across all social media channels to achieve a coherent and successful strategy. (Zarrella, 2010; 34) notes that “users of one kind of social media are likely to be users of other types; it makes sense to invite those who interact with you on Twitter to join your page on Facebook.”

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CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter examined documented research on the area of advertising with the to contribute knowledge in the field of social media advertising. This chapter examines how the relevant data for addressing the research objective were collected.

Methodology refers to the techniques used for conducting research or studying a research problem, it includes research design, data gathering and data analysis with the aim of getting the best response to a research problem. The research problem for this study was to find the most effective way of using social media as an advertising tool. The study followed various guidelines during the process of carrying out the research. Those guidelines included examination of the level of awareness on the importance of social media as an advertising tool among companies; identification of gaps on the level of awareness. The research also aimed to increase understanding, insight and clarity on media consumption habits among Kenyans on social media and finally evaluate and critique the standing ways of using social media and suggest more effective ways of using it as an advertising tool.

The credibility of findings and conclusions extensively depend on the quality of the research design, data collection, data management, and data analysis. This chapter will be dedicated to the description of the methods and procedures done in order to obtain the data, how they will be analysed, interpreted, and how the conclusion will be met. The guidelines above determined the data that was collected and its relevance in responding to the study problem.

3.2 Research Design

This research project adopted a mixed method research design. The study employed both qualitative and quantitative approaches. The quantitative approach focused on obtaining numerical findings was used with the survey method. The interview on the other hand, made up the qualitative approach of the study as this focused on personal accounts, observations, description and individual insights of the respondents. This study employed the combined approach so as to overcome the limitations of both approaches.

According to Creswell (2003) survey research involves collecting quantifiable information from a sample by determining the current status of a sample population with respect to one or more variables. Mugenda & Mugenda (2003) further state that survey research “seeks to obtain information that describes existing phenomena by asking individuals about their perceptions, attitudes, behaviors or values” (p165).

The research employed purposive sampling technique in the determining the level of awareness of social media as an advertising tool. Purposive sampling means sampling with a purpose in mind- that there are one or more specific predetermined groups being targeted.

Purposive sampling was used after verifying that the respondents met the criteria being in the sample. Purposive sampling was useful because the targeted sample was reached and sampling for proportionality was not the primary concern.

This type of sample was relevant to this study because social media management experts together with account management professionals at Agency level at the decision making level understood and was expected to make decisions based on prevailing matters as stated in this study. To add to that, the stated professionals have over the years utilized social media as an

advertising tool on behalf of their clients. The research purposely selected Kenyans top 5 social media management agencies and administered. The researcher chose, Shekele, Squad Digital, Red Giant, Smoke Signal and Gina Din. These professionals are deemed to have significant knowledge relevant to the field of study.

To ensure the research covered all bases, the researcher also purposely selected key informant who utilize social media as an advertising tool on a daily basis on behalf of their clients. Their constant utilization of the said platforms gave them the critical edge in acting as consultants in the study. In this case we choose two Kenyan celebrities with the most number of adverts on their social media page. We choose Maina Kageni and Caroline Mutoko.

The research also used in-depth interviews with key informants to establish their views on the most effective way of using social media as an advertising tool. Data for this research was also collected using observation method of 5 companies that use social media for advertisement.

The research also employed qualitative research methods. Two types of data were used: the primary and the secondary data. The primary data were derived from the answers respondents gave in the self-administered questionnaire prepared by the researcher. In addition, the information obtained from the interview also provided primary research data that supported the study. The secondary data on the other hand, were derived from the findings stated in published documents and literatures related to the research problem. These were based from the recent literatures related to the shift from traditional to social media advertising and the factors that challenge it and the consumption habits of advertisements by social media used and the concepts cited by the respondents.

3.3 Research Population

According to Mugenda & Mugenda (2003) population is an entire group of individuals, events or objects, having common observable characteristics. There are two kinds of population; target population and accessible population. The former refers the total set of subjects in a study where the research will be generalized while the latter refers to the set of subjects from which the sample of the study is to be derived. For this research, the target population refers to the 11.6 million Kenyans with access to internet as stipulated in the Communications Authority of Kenya 2012/2013 report while the accessible population is 200 respondents purposively chosen from Kenyans on social media.

3.4 Research Approach; Sampling and Sampling Techniques

This research used a mixed approach of both qualitative and quantitative methods. According to Creswell (2003) the use of more than one method to investigate the same research problem strengthens research findings through the combination of information sources and analytical approaches. Mixed method approach helps to overcome any bias, which is inherent within a single method approach, adds value to the theoretical debate and also complements the limitation of one method with the other's strength (Creswell 2003:210).

Qualitative method was used to gather narrative data that requires no numeral figures. It was used to collect information on the most effective of using social media as an advertising tool in Kenya via in-depth interviews with 5 social media management companies and 2 celebrities who are paid to advertise good and services via social media. Purposive sampling was used to identify the persons to include in the said interviews. This is where cases were purposely identified because of the fact that they hold the desired information for this research. The researcher also

used observation to collect qualitative data by observing social media advertising habits of 5 companies.

Quantitative method was used to gather numerical data from users of social media platforms to determine their views on the most effective way of using social media as an advertising tool in Kenya. Of interest was to find out their favorite social media platforms, how often they use the said platforms, what adverts strike them on social media and why. A sample of 200 respondents was randomly identified from Kenyans on social media.

3.5 Data Collection Methods

Data collection methods included administered questionnaires and in-depth interviews. Questionnaires were used to gather quantitative data while interviews were conducted to gather qualitative data. Questionnaires were distributed by email to identified respondents and also administered in person via telephone. The questionnaires and interview schedules were tested before actual data collection to determine their reliability. The researcher also used observation to collect data.

3.6 Data Analysis

Data analysis refers to a body of methods that help to describe facts, detect patterns and develop explanations. It finds averages and difference among the averages. Data analysis applies across all sciences.

Collected data was coded, that is, numbers were assigned to responses to put them in a limited number of classes appropriate to the research problem. The research used manual coding where each questionnaire was assigned a number and entered in rows while the questions were entered

into columns. The coded answers were entered to correspond with the code sheet and question number. The data was then classified. Data with common characteristics were placed in one class; hence all data fell into particular groups and classes. The data was classified into particular groups and classes. The data was classified according to its attributes and their quantitative factors were explored on how it answered to the objectives of the study.

The data was then analyzed using statistical methods resulting in the generation of percentage distribution and frequency tables presented through graphs, pie charts and narrations from which inferences and conclusions were drawn.

Screenshots of observed data as well as narrations from in-depth interviews are provided to supplement the quantitative statistics.

3.7 Limitations and challenges of the Study

One of the main limitations was uncompleted questionnaires. This was because out of the 200 questionnaires distributed, only 172 were returned. However the 172 returned questionnaires that were returned were still adequate to respond to the research question.

Cancelled interviews were another challenge faced. This is because some the key informants being celebrities, they were too busy to find time to allocate for the interview. On several occasion, the interviewers let the interviewer at the reception for hours without any formal communication. The interview was later cancelled. We however managed to find time to perform the interview after a period of time.

Unwillingness to participate in the interview was another challenge. Some of the initial interviews who we termed as key informants refused to schedule meetings for the interviews.

They did so by ignoring our email requests to sit down for the interview. The respondents that finally confirmed for the interview were however sufficient to continue the study.

Cost implication was another aspect we had to face. The constant driving to various interview locations took a toll on the overall finances allocated to the research.

Despite all those constraints, necessary measures were taken not to allow the challenges to compromise the quality of the study and to ensure the objectives of the study were met.

3.8 Conclusion.

This chapter has explained the methodology used to obtain the research data; mixed methodology. The data was obtained from random sampling and purposive sampling. As noted, in terms of approach, the study employed both qualitative and quantitative approaches. The quantitative approach focused on obtaining numerical findings was used with the survey method. The interview on the other hand, made up the qualitative approach of the study as this focused on personal accounts, observations, description and individual insights of the respondents. This study employed the combined approach so as to overcome the limitations of both approaches.

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CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the results of the study after exploring how respondents reacted to questions on the most effective way of using of social media as an advertising tool. It discusses data analysis and interpretations of the results on respondents' level of awareness of social media, their level of access to social media and their perception on the actual versus potential role of social media in enhancing the chances of influencing purchasing decisions. The responses obtained from our respondents were analyzed using quantitative methods while those from in-depth interviews with key informants were analyzed using qualitative methods.

4.2 Background Information of Research Respondents

This research relied on respondents drawn from users and key players in the Social media and advertising fields with a core focus on Facebook and Twitter platforms. The researcher identified active participants on social media by observing their social media pages and requested them to participate in a survey via telephone or email.

Out of 200 respondents' identified 172 successfully filled and returned completed questionnaires. The research sample was made up respondents ranging from 18 to 55 and above years old. Out of these, 80 were male (46%) while 92 (54%) were female. As shown in table 4.1 below, majority of the respondents were aged between 21-30 years with post secondary education. It was important to determine the most active age group, as this would be critical in determining the tone of advertisements on social media. Once we know who the target audience is, we are able to talk to them using their language. Below is the results of the survey,

Table 1. Survey Respondent Characteristics

	Female					Male				
Level of Education	18-20 years	21-30 years	31-40 years	41-50 years	>50 years	18-20 years	21-30 years	31-40 years	41-50 years	>50 years
Class 8 or lower	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0
Secondary School	7	2	6	0	0	5	4	3	2	1
Certificate	1	5	4	2	0	1	7	2	6	3
Diploma	1	15	9	3	3	0	10	4	1	2
Degree	0	16	7	3	3	0	11	5	4	3
Post Graduate	0	1	2	1	1	0	1	1	1	1

Source: Field survey 2014.

As mentioned on the previous page, the research sample was made up respondents ranging from 18 to 55 and above years old. Out of these, 80 were male (46%) while 92 (54%) were female. Majority of the respondents were aged between 21-30 years with post secondary education. The reason for quick adaption by the younger generation is because the said target group is quick to learn and adapt to change as compared to the older generation.

The researcher also used observation to study the Twitter and Facebook accounts of five companies (Cooperative Bank, Safaricom, Fogo Gauchio, Jambo Jet and Jameson) and 2 highly

active celebrities (Maina Kageni and Caroline Mutoko) that use social media for advertising. 10 social media managers from social media management companies including Shekele, Squad Digital, Red Giant, Smoke Signal and Gina Din were interviewed for their expert views on the use of social media for advertising.

A social media expert from Shekele stated that;

“With the millions of new blog posts, videos and news stories posted everyday it can be challenging to rise above all the noise and get your business noticed. Instead of selling your product or services based on its features focus on telling a compelling story. A good story captures peoples attention and helps cultivate the development of brand champions. These brand champions will grow your brand and drive new customers to your business by sharing your story with their friends via social media.”

In his opinion story telling is the most effective way of communicating with target audience on social media.

Another expert from Gina Din mentioned that;

“With social media a business of any size can connect with customers, grow their brand and generate sales without spending a dime on paid advertising. In effect, social media has changed the game, small to midsize businesses can effective compete irrespective of their marketing and advertising budgets.

For businesses that embrace social media and engage with customers the rewards can be exception. Research shows that positive reviews by friends is one of the most effective ways to influence purchasing decisions and cultivate brand loyalty.”

In her opinion, peer to peer communication is important for every business success on social media. People tend to trust what they hear from their friends more than what businesses post on social media.

Another expert from Red Giant stated that;

“With new social media sites popping up every month it can be challenging to figure out where to focus your time and energy. It is easy to forget that social media is not about one site vs another, it is about cultivating relationships. Instead of comparing the pros and cons find the social media sites that enable you to most effectively engage with customers and build brand loyalty.”

According to the social media expert, companies should not to be tempted to open all social media sites that come up every year. It is important to understand which of the said pages is relevant to your business and maximize communication on those pages.

Another expert stated that;

“When bad news hits companies used to be able to take their time and plan how to respond. Today, a negative story or customer experience can be shared with millions of people within a matter of hours. If you wait to respond, a small story can reach millions and causing irreparable damage to your brand. Focus on responding to negative publicity in real-time on social media sites that are most popular with your customers, and you will be more successful in transforming negative publicity into a positive brand building opportunity.”

According to this, the timing of communication by any company is very important as this could break or make business relationships. When a company is hit by a tragedy, its consumers go to

their social media pages to seek clarification. Lack of this could lead to distrust of the said company.

One of Kenyas famous celebrities who uses social media as an advertising tool also quoted that;

“Mistakes are bound to happen in any environment that is centered around real-time interaction and undergoing constant change.. Instead of worrying about making mistakes you should be worried about not making them. If you are not making mistakes that means your not experimenting. If you’re not experimenting that means your missing out on discovering new ways your business can use social media”

She stated that companies should not be afraid to communicate using social media in the fear that they will mention something that could be misconstrued by the audiences. She further emphasized on the importance of having constant communication on social media.

Below is an example of a Kenyan Celebrity page.

Fig 11: Screenshot of a Facebook Page used by Kenyan celebrities as an advertising tool.



Source: World Wide Web (Facebook page) www.facebook.com/carolinemutoko

On this screenshot, you can see how Caroline Mutoko, a famous radio presenter, has customised her page. As seen above, Caroline Mutoko is deploying indirect media communication.

The researcher further observed various social media pages in order to examine how they communicate with their target audience and further understand how the target audience responds to various messages. Below is an example of a Fogo Gaucho twitter page that's maintained by Reg Giant Digital.

Fig 11: Screenshot of Fogo Gaucho Twitter Page.



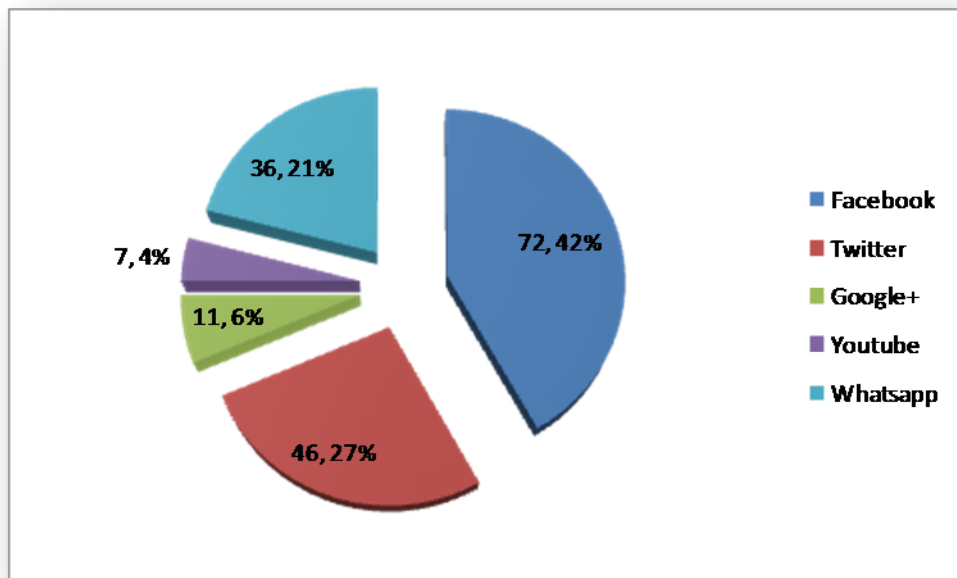
Source World Wide Web. www.twitter.com/fogogauchonbi

On the screenshot above, you can see how Fogo Gaucho uses their twitter page. They use the profile page to describe to the audience more about the company. They also use it to run online campaigns to pull numbers to follow their page.

4.3. Awareness on Use of Social media for Advertising

The researcher sought to find out the most used social media platform. As shown in figure 3 below, Facebook emerged the most used platform among respondents with 42% indicating they used it mostly, 27% indicated they frequently used Twitter while 21%, 6% and 4% indicated they used Whatsapp, Google+ and YouTube respectively. The popularity of Facebook as a social media platform can be attributed to the fact that of the listed platforms, Facebook was the first to be founded and its simplicity also contributes to the large number of people using it. Facebook can also be used on many phones with 2G connections unlike other social media platforms like Whatsapp that require a Smartphone with 3G network and above. Also important to note is the fact that key telecommunication companies have made it either absolutely affordable to access Facebook, to some point free to use as compared to other Social media Platforms

Fig 13: Social media Platforms Used



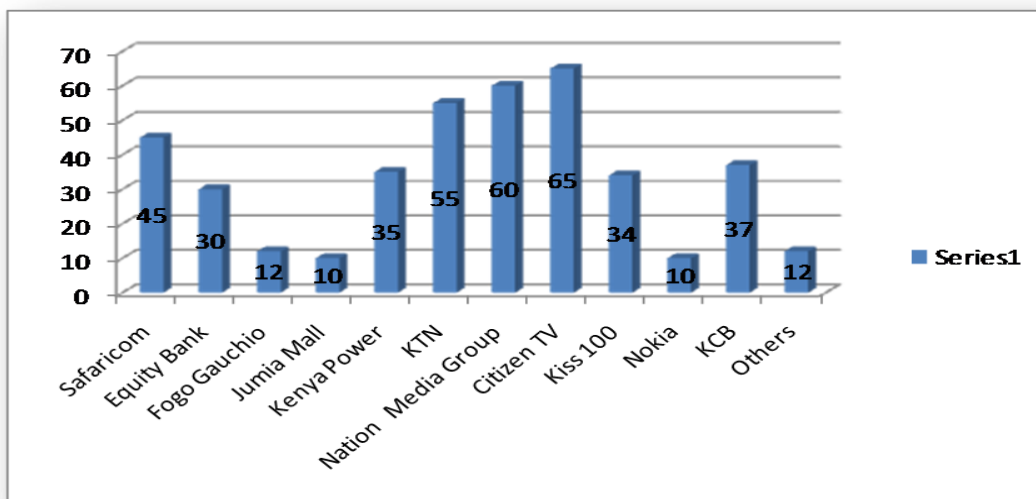
Source: Field Survey 2014

One of the social media celebrities concurred with these findings. He stated that:

“Due to its popularity, all phones with internet access come pre-installed with a Facebook app which makes it easily available to all. You will find that everybody with a Twitter account has a Facebook account but not all with Facebook accounts have Twitter accounts, meaning Facebook is more reliable as it satisfies all their needs.”

The researcher also sought to establish if respondents were aware of some of the most active social media accounts used by Kenyan organizations. By finding out which of the pages are popular, the researcher was able to observe these pages to pinpoint what attracted the large number of audiences to this page. By doing so, we were able to understand the tone they use. As shown in figure 14 below, a large number of respondents indicated that they were aware of the most popular accounts including Safaricom, Fogo Gaucho, Kenya Power, Equity Bank, Jumia Mall. The most popular being KTN, Citizen TV and Nation TV. Safaricom was the most popular non media organization.

Fig 14: Companies that Use Social media



Source: Field Survey 2014

The survey, as seen, revealed the social media pages that were the most active.

Below is a screen shot example of one of Kenya's most popular news page. This was attributed to the number of visits per day and respondents as per our survey. We observed this page in order to find out how they communicate with their audiences and why they are so popular.

Fig 15: Screenshot showing number of likes on KTN Kenya Facebook Page

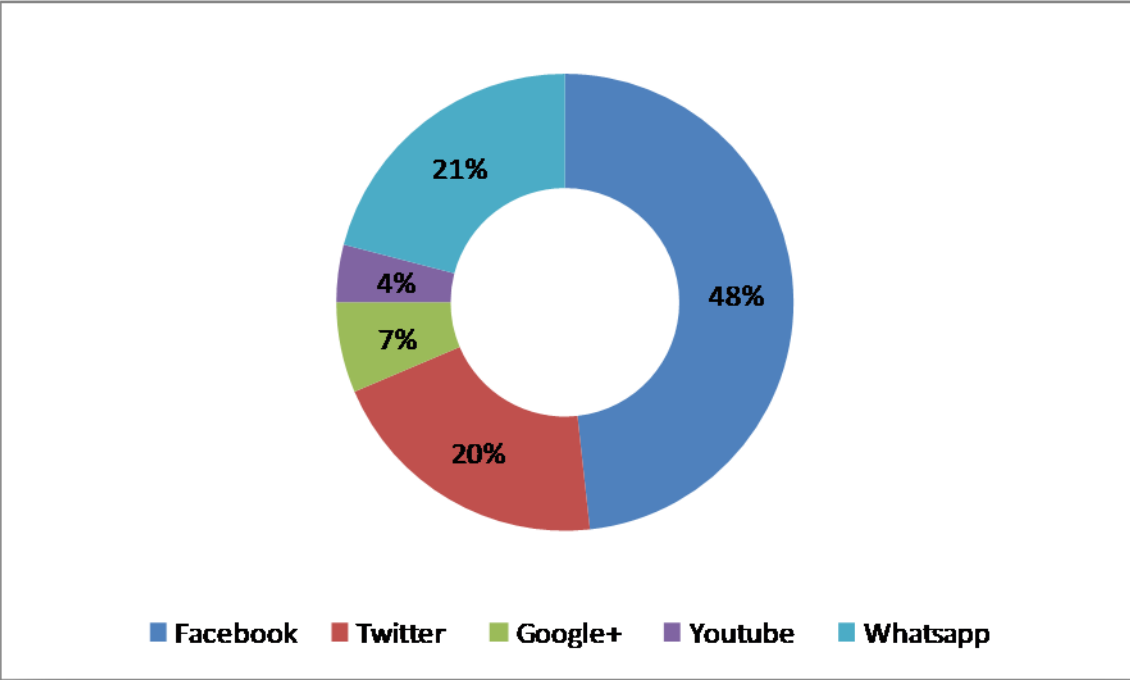


Source: World Wide Web. www.facebook.com/ktnkenya.php

From the observations carried out, their popularity can be attributed to the fact that Kenyans in general need news updates. You will also find that a majority of Kenyans will visit these social media platforms to get a chance to interact with their favorite on air celebrities. Another reason why media houses are the most popular is because during their news broadcast, these media houses pose questions that get people to visit the sites to comment on them.

Respondents were asked how frequently they referred to a social media platform for research before making any purchases and which platform they felt would be the most appropriate to get as much information as possible. Significantly, most of the respondents indicated that they relied heavily on social media to gather information necessary to guide them with their purchasing decisions. For instance, 48% of the respondents indicated they visited the said companies Facebook page, 20% indicated they referred to the Whatsapp page while 21% indicated they referred to the Twitter Page. Figure 16 below illustrates this:

Fig 16: Social media Platforms Used for Research

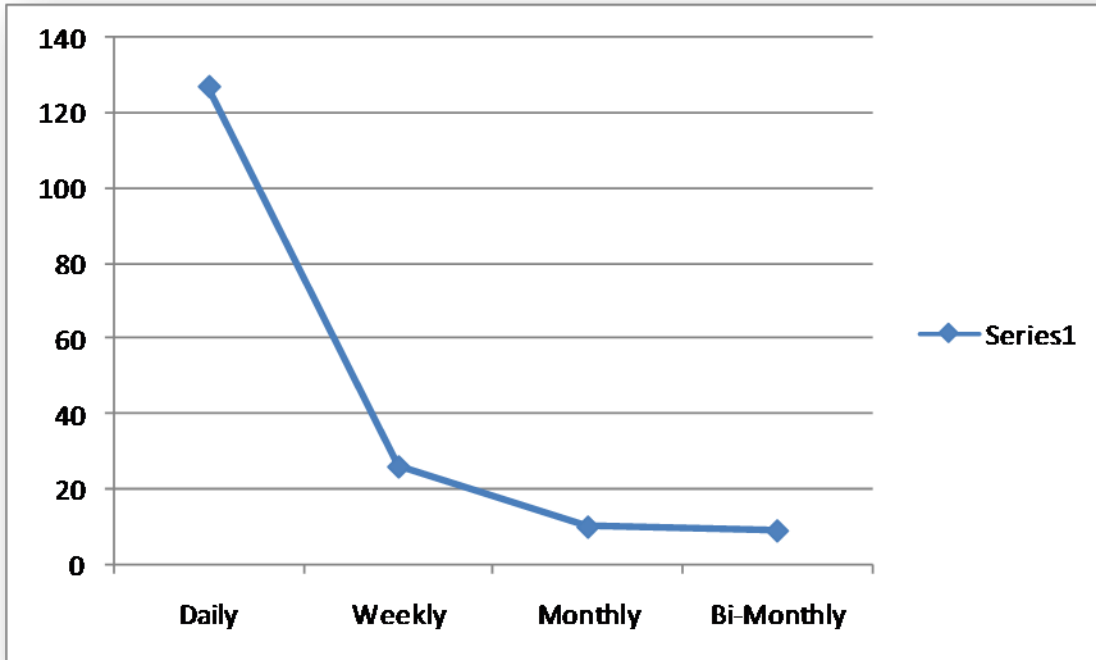


Source: Field Survey 2014

The researcher asked respondents how often they use Social media. The purpose of this question was to establish the effectiveness of social media as a channel for enhancing social media from

the consumer's perspective. Significantly, most of the respondents indicated they used social media on a daily basis.

Fig 17: Frequency of Use of Social media Platforms



Source: Field Survey 2014

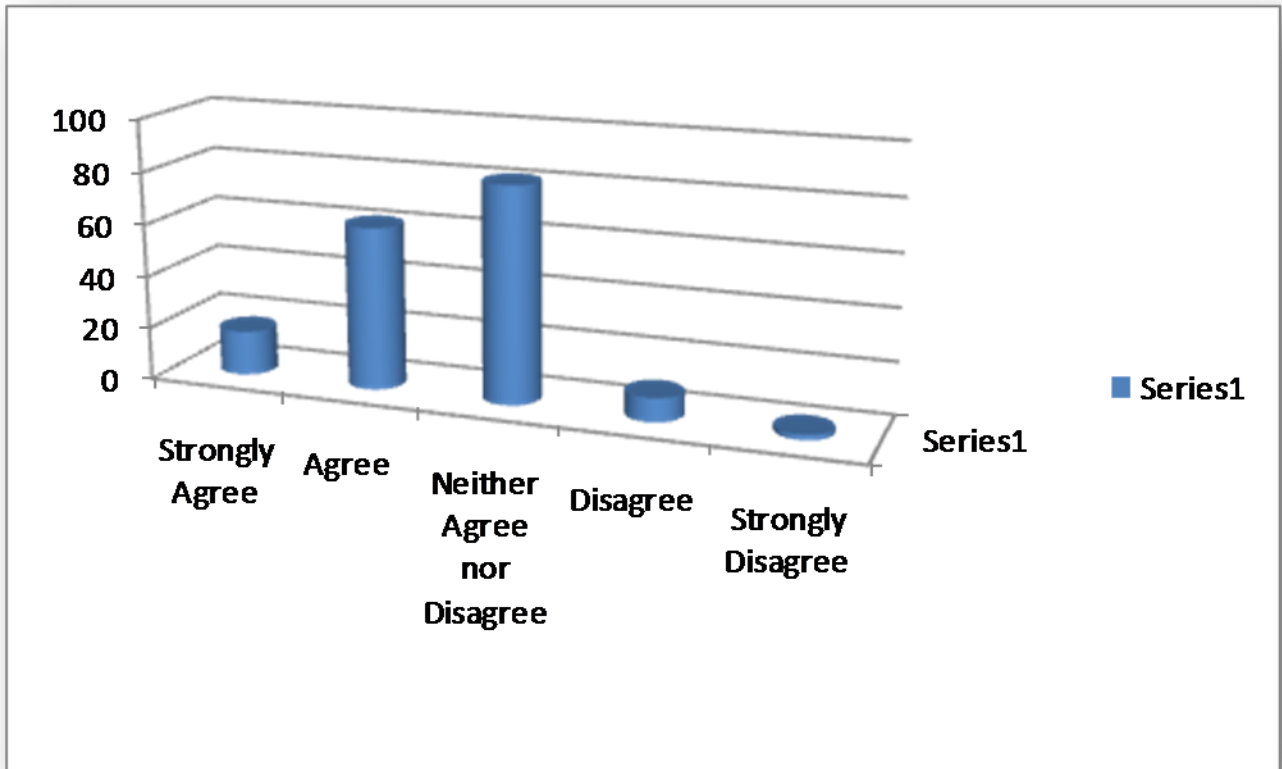
This is attributed to the fact that most Kenyans turn to social media to keep in touch with their friends almost to a minute to minute time frame.

4.4 Understanding Consumption Habits of Social media Adverts

Understanding the various consumption habits of advertisements on social media was of great significance to our study. We therefore sought the opinions of our respondents on a number of issues through a range of questions. For example, we sought to find out “To what extent do you

agree with the following statement “Social media advertisements play a great role in influencing purchasing decisions?”.

Fig 18: Social media advertisements play a great role in influencing purchasing decisions



Source: Field Survey 2014

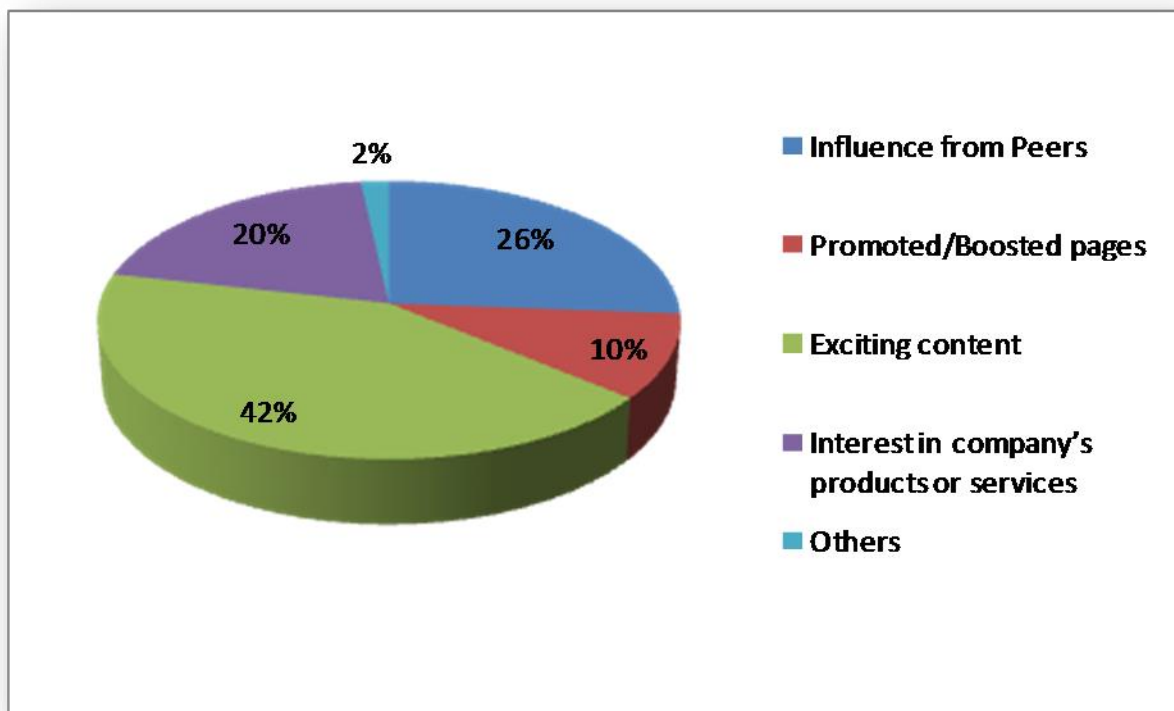
As figure 18 above shows, majority of the respondents indicated they neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement. Significantly, respondents stated that social media by itself does not play a significant role in their purchasing decision, nor did it play a key role. They did not make any purchasing decisions because they saw an advertisement on social media alone.

One of the key informants interviewed for this research when asked about this said:

“Social media is relatively new in Kenya and the use of this new medium for advertising is an even newer concept. Kenyans need time to get used to the idea but given how well Kenyans adapt to new concepts it is only a matter of time.”

On factors that determine the fan pages liked, many of the respondents indicated that exciting content as one of the major factor in deciding whether or not they became fans of pages. Other factors include influence from peers, interest in company products and services and promoted pages as figure 19 below shows;

Fig 19: Factors Influencing Decision to Like/Follow Pages



Source: Field Survey 2014

According to the survey done, 42% stated that that were inclined to like a social media page depending on how exciting the content uploaded on the pages was. Out of the respondents, 26%

stated they liked a page because their friends like it too. 20% liked a social media page because they were interested in the company's product or service. Of the total respondents, 10% stated that they liked a page when they saw a promoted/boosted page.

The importance of good quality content was emphasized by one of the key informant persons who noted that to attract and retain fans one needs to speak to them in a language they understand and can relate to. He pointed out how some companies make updates in *sheng'* or used inspirational quotes to inspire their audiences at the beginning of the day.

Below is an extracted screenshot detailing the use of catchy phrases to grab attention of the target audience.

Fig 20: Screenshot showing use of catchy language and images in social media adverts



Source: World Wide Web. www.facebook.com/safaricomkenya.php

On the screenshot, we see Safaricom communicating with its audience using a language they know.

Posts with incentives to be won such as airtime were ranked as those likely to be viewed by respondents. Other top factors that help to grab attention of social media audiences include length of message, use of images and timing of the message.

On this, one of the key informants who does social media management noted that audiences were more likely to respond to a short and punchy post accompanied by images and that had a prize at the end.

“Kenyans love free things. Even if we tell them the 1000th comment will win them will all work hard to be the 1000th person to comment in the process we get traffic and get to create awareness about our products and services.” Below is an example of a giveaway promotion of a Kenyan companies facebook page

Fig 21: Screenshot Showing Use of Incentives to Attract Fans to a Facebook Page



Source: World Wide Web. www.facebook.com/cadburydairymilk.php

On this screenshot, we see Cadbury Dairy Milk offering a free trip to the UK. The significant number of likes (10,380,963) could be attributed to the fact that Kenyans liked the page in order to find out how they can win this trip.

4.5 Effectiveness of Social media Advertisements in Influencing Buying Decisions

The effectiveness of social media advertisements in influencing purchasing decisions is important to the study as it outlines the very essence of why we should carry out this study.

To determine this, respondents were asked which of the 8 ways of communication they relied on for advertisements. Out of the total number of respondents, 27% indicated that they relied on television, 20% indicated they relied on radio while 17% and 15% indicated that they relied on newspapers and social media respectively. Social media being a relatively new phenomenon ranks highly above other traditional medium such as posters, billboards and branded merchandise. Also, the margin between the top 3 and social media is very narrow. This is because mainstream media has significantly slowed down in terms of usage. This can be attributed to the fact that it is fairly expensive. Another factor is due to the growth of the digital era, audiences are moving to social media. Companies advertise where the numbers are.

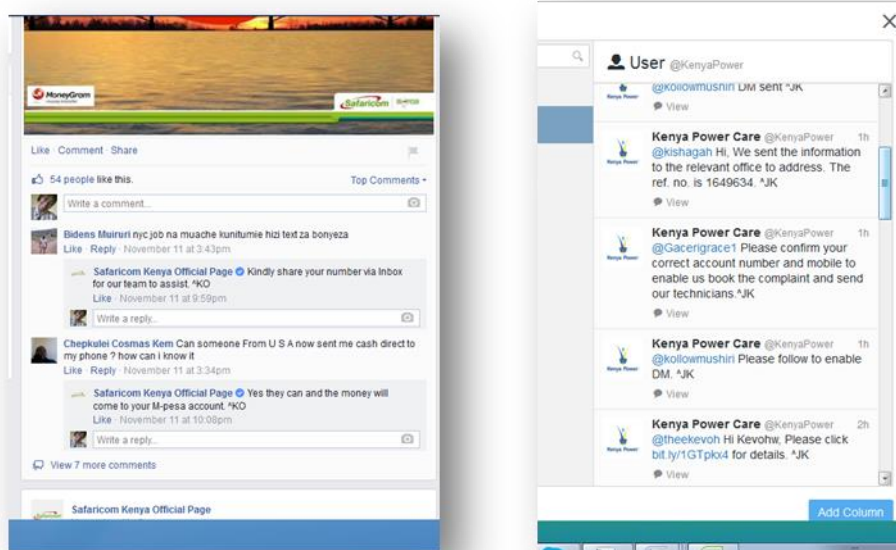
One of the social media managers interviewed for this research agreed with these findings. She said that:

“Despite its newness in the market, social media is proving to be a force to reckon with in the advertising world and could soon change how things are advertised. It is up to advertisers to find innovative ways to maximally use social media to reach to audiences.”

One of the celebrities concurred with these findings. He attributed social media's fast growth as an advertising medium to the fact that unlike traditional media social media gives audiences a

right of reply. Audiences can therefore ask follow-up questions on a product and receive instant feedback a feature that most traditional media lack. Below is an example of how social media managers are responding to queries on behalf of their clients.

Fig 22: Screenshots showing responses to customer queries on Safaricom and Kenya Power
Social media

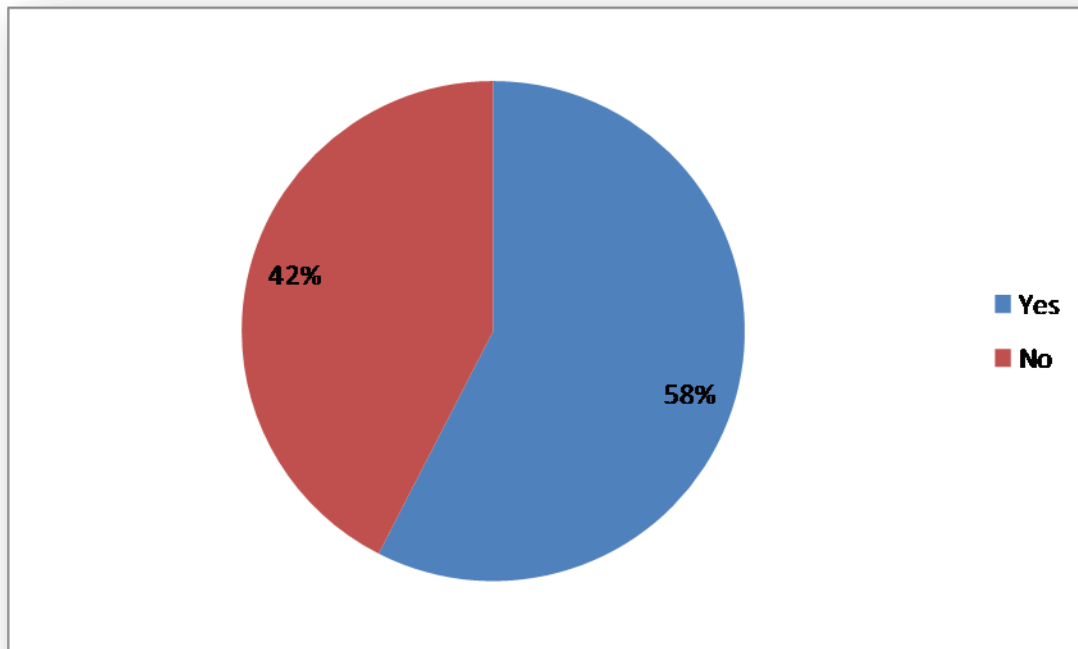


Source: Field Survey 2014

Safaricom and KPLC gave quick responses to their audiences as seen above. Quick response is important because users rely on the information given by this companies to make purchasing decisions.

Audiences were asked if they had ever made purchasing decisions due to influence from social media advertisements.

Fig 23: If Social media Adverts Have Influenced Purchasing Decisions



Source: Field Survey 2014

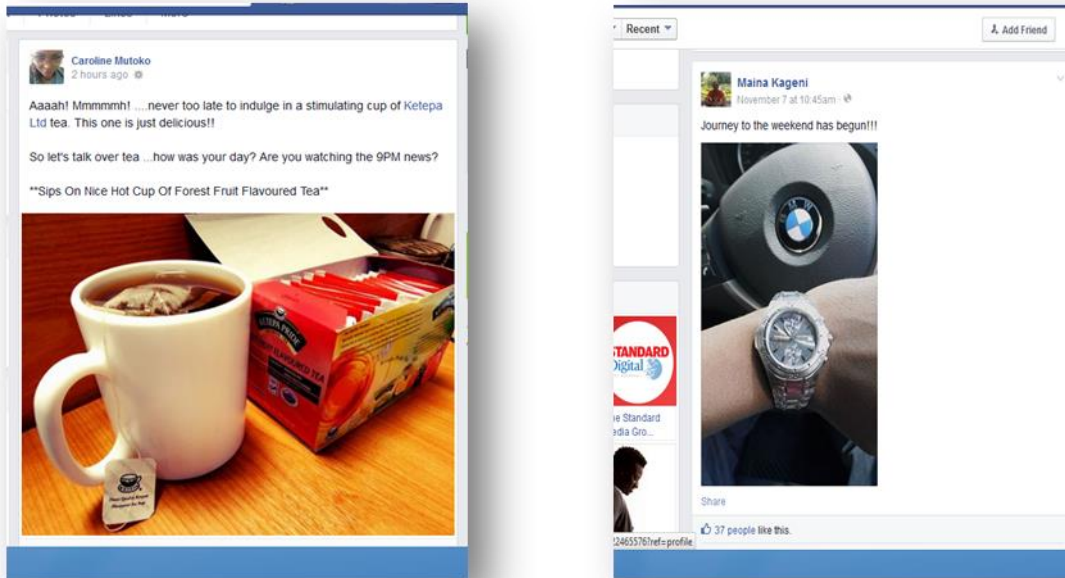
Out of the total number of respondents, 58% responded in the affirmative against 42% that denied the fact that social media adverts have influenced their purchasing decisions.

One of the respondents explained that influence to buy goods or services due to social media advertisements could be through indirect advertising. He said:

“Advertisers understand that a tweet recommending how good a product helps to build trust among customers. A common tactic these days is to pay some influential personalities on social media to act indirectly as brand ambassadors where they receive the goods for free in exchange for tweets endorsing your product.”

Below is an example of celebrity social media pages, where the said celebrities are employing an indirect form of advertising on behalf of their clients.

Fig 24: Screenshots Showing Indirect Advertising through Product Endorsements



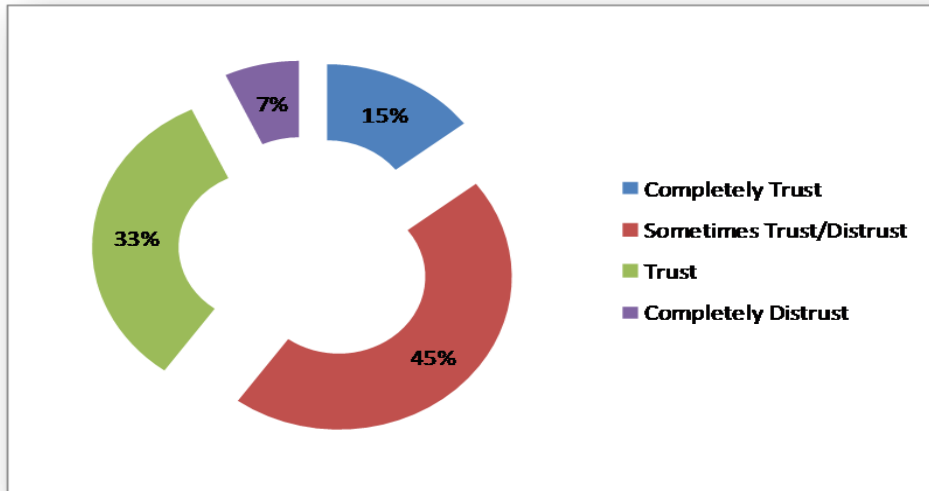
Source: World Wide Web www.facebook.com/profile.carolinemutoko.php and www.facebook.com/profile.mainakageni.php

On the screenshot above, Caroline states that she is sipping on some great tea. The image of the client is displayed tactfully. The same applies with Maina Kageni.

The researcher also sought to find out how much respondents trusted advertisements they saw on social media. Over half the respondents indicated that they trusted the advertisements. This could be attributed to the fact that social media allows for feedback and customers can always seek clarification where necessary.

Figure 25 below captures this:

Fig 25 Level of Trust of Social media Adverts



Source: Field Survey 2014

Out of all the respondents interviewed, 45% stated that sometimes they trust/distrust adverts placed on social media pages. 33% stated that they trust adverts placed on social media while

The results could be attributed to the fact that social media is still a relatively new form of communication and it might take some time before Kenyans completely trust all the information they see on this media. Another reason could be that anyone can open a social media page with an alias; consumers have to trust that the pages really belong to the said company before they can make any purchasing decisions.

4.6 Conclusion.

As seen on this chapter, Social media Marketing offers to businesses a large variety of resources in terms of Social media channels available, and a large variety of benefits, such as brand exposure, targeted traffic and leads generation. According to the research findings, Facebook stood out as the social media platform of choice due. It is particularly popular among youth aged between 21-30 years old.

Results indicated that advertising on social media is different from that of traditional forms of advertising media. Social media managers should adapt a specific way of communicating to social media users to effectively utilize the specified social media platforms to communicate effectively through the use of incentives, images, giveaways and celebrity endorsements.

In the next chapter, the researcher will give recommendations and conclusions on the study.

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CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY RECCOMEDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION:

The overriding purpose of this study was to find the most effective way of using social media as an advertising tool. To properly figure this out, the research sort to look at two key stakeholders in the advertising world; the advertiser (in this case companies that want to communicate messages to its target audience using social media) and the consumer of this advertisements (in this case the target audience) and finally fill the critical gap between the above listed parties using social media for effective communication.

5.2 Summary Recommendations:

To accomplish that goal it became necessary to reach some prerequisite goals. The research sort to establish the general level of awareness on the importance of social media as an advertising tool in various companies in Kenya. The research also strived to find out the consumption habits of advertisements by the general public on social media. Related to that effort, it was important to examine the effectiveness of social media advertisements in influencing buying decisions.

Once these fundamental steps were achieved, this research was able to go forward. This chapter reports the conclusions and recommendations that resulted from this study.

To better understand advertiser's strategic motivations, the study reviewed two advertising theories. The first theory, (Lavidge and Steiner's hierarchy of effects advertising model, 1961; 45), comes from advertising literature on how advertising works. It explored the hierarchy's

potential to predict consumer purchase decisions and its application to social media as an advertising medium. Next, we examined existing research on a more modern advertising theory, (Taylor's Six-Segment Strategy Wheel, 1999; 36). This theory explored a contemporary understanding of consumer motivations and created a practical model for advertising practitioners to develop message strategies. It was then established that the industry key insight on how to use social media as advertising tool especially here in Kenya.

This research project adopted a mixed method research design. It adopted qualitative and quantitative research methods. The research used in-depth interviews with key informants this is including top paid celebrities on social media to advertise to establish their views on the most effective way of using social media as an advertising tool. Data for this research was also collected using observation method of 5 social media management companies that use social media for advertisement strategically pin pointing their highest rated clients. The research also engaged in a quantitative research whereby the researcher distributed 200 questionnaires to active social media participants.

The key informants (celebrities who are paid to advertise on behalf of clients on social media) were asked to compare social media as an advertising tool to traditional media. They were also asked whether they think Kenyans have fully embraced the use of social media as advertising and whether Kenyans are comfortable making purchases on social media. The key informants were also asked how effective whether they feel social media platforms is important in the field of advertising. Further to that the informants were also asked to name some of the challenges and advantages of using social media for advertising.

The respondents were asked if social media a threat or boost for traditional media. They we also asked to name some of tactics you employ to ensure your post reaches large audiences and the ways companies attract fans and followers to their pages. They were also to name the social media platforms that are the most popular among their audiences and why do you think so.

Through the use of the survey instrument developed for this study, data were collected which addressed the research problems posed in the first chapter of this dissertation.

The main empirical findings are chapter specific and were summarized within the respective empirical chapters: (Chapter 4). This section will synthesize the empirical findings to answer the study's two research questions.

5.2.1 What is the general level of awareness on the importance of social media as an advertising tool by companies in Kenya.

From the findings, it emerged that majority of respondents are aware of social media platforms and their use in advertising. This is indicated by the fact that majority were able to name existing platforms that use social media. It emerged that most companies in Kenya have a social media page to back them. The most popular social media platforms being Twitter, Facebook and Instagram and WhatsApp. Facebook emerged as the most popular social media platform used by respondents. The respondents further stated that they required further communication on other mainstream media for them to trust the message on social media.

5.2.2 What are the consumption habits of advertisements by the general public on social media?

The research findings in chapter 4 were that most respondents visited social media on a daily basis. It also emerged that many were unsure of how great the role of social media in enhancing advertisements was. Key informants attributed this to the novelty of social media as a communication medium. Users of social media were more prone to trust other users on how effective a product was over information by the companies. Content was found to be the key determinant of how well messages are received by masses. Secondly, the research revealed that customers were more inclined to respond to an advert when the message incorporated the use of images. Short and messages that do not need you to press “see more” continue reading were more likely to get feedback. Thirdly, companies that tagged their advertisements on trending topics were more likely to get more coverage on social media through sharing. Fourthly, anytime a company used incentive for example “prizes will be won”, received more attention in terms of Liking, sharing and commenting. Fifthly, respondents stated that inspirational quotes accompanying advertising messages were received better by target audience as compared to those that just placed the advertisement. Lastly, most respondents stated that they would stop following a company if it repeated adverts.

5.2.3 How effective is social media advertisements in influencing buying decisions among Kenyans?

Social media, despite its novelty in the advertising world, is ranked highly among sources for new information on products due to the fact that it allows for feedback between customers and companies. There is a high level of trust in advertisements aired on social media. It also emerged

that companies with social media pages were regarded as more credible than those without the said platforms. Also to note was that respondents mentioned that companies that focus on advertising only on their social media platform were less popular than the ones that concentrated on connecting with their viewers. How promptly a company responded to questions posted the social media pages was also seen as very important in the decision making process. Finally, celebrity endorsements and brand ambassadors on social media

5.3 Recommendation for future research.

The scale of this debate is therefore extensive and multifaceted even at the local level. To generate achievable policy strategies and development targets with regards to effective ways of using social media as an advertising tool, there is need for more case studies at the agency level to allow further assessment of local reception of the subject.

Exploring the following as future research strategies can facilitate the attainment of this goal:

- Given the changing nature of technology, it is important to further research on how trends affect consumption habits of advertisements by consumers.
- Recommendations for future research also include using quantitative methods to more empirically measure attitudes of advertising practitioners toward social media usage for marketing and communications.
- Additionally, this study only represents the advertiser side of the issue. Further investigations into consumer attitudes toward social media usage for marketing and communications could compliment this study.

- Advertising practitioners and academics could also benefit from an experimental study concerning the effectiveness of social media marketing on brand preference and intent to purchase.

5.4 Recommendation to social media experts and practitioners

A broad assessment of general social media activities needs to be conducted; this could start from having formal education in the form of degree, diploma and certificate programmes in the major universities in the country.

Seeing as Kenya is a developing nation, another option would be to invite social media professionals to the country to advise and guide on how to utilize social media. This is because first world countries have tackled social media and developed working strategies that could be important for the country.

Social media should be taken as a core department, essential to the growth of the organization. This is because the world is going digital and all efforts will soon, if not already, be put towards social media as a marketing tool.

Key players responsible for developing, executing and monitoring the social media strategy needs to be defined; the tone of the organization on social media should be identified before hand and incorporated on the brand manuals and consequently a social media policy or set of guidelines needs to be drafted; the risks of social media participation needs to be shared with the employees; and a social media agreement that employees can review and sign annually needs to be created.

On the whole, Social media Marketing is an extremely powerful marketing tool that not every business knows how to use properly yet. It is still very new and it needs to be implemented through a real and concretely defined strategy. The few limitations and risks related to Social media marketing can seem scary and challenging, but they are only precautions to be taken on time in order to achieve complete notable success in the Social media strategy.

5.5 Conclusion.

As we have studied in the previous sections of this report, Social media Marketing offers to businesses a large variety of resources in terms of Social media channels available, and a large variety of benefits, such as brand exposure, targeted traffic and leads generation. According to the research findings, Facebook stood out as the social media platform of choice due. It is particularly popular among youth aged between 21-30 years old.

Results indicated that advertising on social media is different from that of traditional forms of advertising media. Social media managers should adapt a specific way of communicating to social media users to effectively utilize the specified social media platforms to communicate effectively through the use of incentives, images, giveaways and celebrity endorsements.

In the current digital media environment, advertisers must provide value or an added benefit to the consumer to gain their attention. Furthermore, companies should view social media platforms as long-term investments and, in doing so, invest time and resources to developing and sustaining them.

It is also important to note that, whether or not a brand chooses to participate in social media, every company should understand these networks and use them for their researching capabilities.

The results of this study not only provide background on social media usage in advertising, but

also provide valuable insight for current practitioners and help reduce the academician-practitioner gap.

However, Social media marketing for businesses also demands efforts and hard work, and has its own limitations and risks before achieving notable success.

Companies need to commit human and time resources to managing their Social media presence. An employee, and sometimes even a complete Social media team, needs to be able to respond to customers' feedbacks and complaints at least every day. The Social media staffs need to be well trained and qualified in order to have answers to every questions and to be able to react when negative comments are made before they get too viral and uncontrollable. Also, this team has to produce new content regularly in order to post at least a few times a week for small businesses, and at least once a day for big multinationals. It is extremely important to always stay active on the Social media sites in order to create a continuous conversation with the audience, encourage their engagement and foster long-term relationships.

Besides, the results of the Social media marketing strategy need to be controlled and measured regularly in order to understand what is working and what is not. Some Social media channels might be more efficient than others for a business, and some might too time-consuming comparing to its benefits. Specific campaigns need to be measure as well, and the impacts of each post need to be analyzed. However, it is usually quite difficult to measure the return on investment, or should we say the return on conversation, of such a strategy. Measuring social media return on investment is not impossible, but it can be very complex because many of the pieces that need to be evaluated are difficult to track. Having specific goals and concrete baselines is crucial to calculating the business' return on investment. Therefore, companies must

have defined clear goals and evaluated the baselines before measuring the results. Then only, metrics tools can be considered.

Quantifying the value of one channel over another can be hard to evaluate, as the measurement and analytics tools available for free are often different from one Social media channel to another. However, some metrics for measuring web traffic have become valuable tools, such as Google Analytics, Tweet Meme Analytics or Hoot Suite. Also, sentiment analysis using Viral Heat, Tweet Feel or Sentiment Metrics for instance, can be relevant when positive and negative comments cannot be distinguished.

We have seen that, while implementing their Social media Marketing strategy, businesses might encounter marketing limitations affecting the final success of their strategy. Furthermore, businesses are also confronted to major risks in domains such as reputational, legal and operational.

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ANNEXES

Appendix 1: Interview Guide (Social media Managers and Celebrities)

1. How do you compare social media as an advertising tool to other traditional mediums of advertising?
2. Do you think Kenyans have fully embraced the use of social media for advertising?
Explain
3. In your opinion, how effective are social media platforms in the field of advertising?
4. What are the challenges of using social media for advertising?
5. What are the advantages of using social media for advertising?
6. What can be done to enhance the use of social media in the field of advertising?
7. Is social media a threat or boost for traditional media? Explain
8. What are some of the tactics you employ to ensure your post reaches large audiences?
9. What are some of the ways companies attract fans and followers to their pages?
10. Which social media platforms are popular with your customers? Why do you think so?

Appendix 2: Questionnaire for Survey Participants

My name is Agnes Barasa. I am a student pursuing a Master of Arts degree in Communication Studies at the University of Nairobi. I am conducting a research on the most effective ways of using social media as an advertising tool. To this end, I kindly request that you complete the following questionnaire regarding your habits, preferences and attitudes on the use of social media for advertising. It should take 10-15 minutes. Your response is of utmost importance to me. Please do not write your name or contact details on the questionnaire. It remains anonymous. Should you have any queries or comments regarding this survey, please contact me via 0723258874 or email agi.barasa@gmail.com

Thank you

Agnes Barasa

SECTION A: PERSONAL INFORMATION

This section of the questionnaire refers to background information. Although I am aware of the sensitivity of the questions in this section, the information will allow me to compare groups of respondents. Once again, I assure you that your response will remain anonymous. Your cooperation is appreciated.

1. Age (tick (√) one that applies)

a) Below 20 years	
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b) 21 – 30 years	
c) 31- 40 years	
d) 41 - 50 years	
e) 41-50 years	
f)50 years and above	

2. Sex (tick (√) one that applies)

a) Male

b) Female

3. Your highest education qualification? (tick (√) one that applies)

a) Class 8 or lower

b) Secondary School

c) Diploma/ Certificate

d) Degree

e) Post Graduate Degree(s)

SECTION B: SOCIAL MEDIA AND ADVERTISING

This section of the questionnaire explores your habits and preferences, if any, with regard to use of social media for advertising. Kindly respond to each of the questions by following the instructions given.

Part 1: Awareness on Use of Social media for Advertising

4. Which of the following is social media platforms do you use? (tick (√) all that apply)

Facebook	
Twitter	
Google+	
YouTube	
Whatsapp	

5. Are you aware of companies that use social media for advertising? If yes, list at least two of these

6. With 1 being most frequently used and 7 being least frequently used, rank the following social media platforms from most frequently to least frequently used to research on a product before making any purchases?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
a) Facebook							
b) Twitter							

c) Google+							
d) YouTube							
e) Whatsapp							

7. How frequently do you use social media? (tick (√) one that applies)

a) Daily	
b) Weekly	
c) Monthly	
d) Bi-monthly	

Part 2: Understanding Consumption Habits of Social media Adverts

8. To what extent do you agree with the following statement “Social media advertisements play a great role in influencing purchasing decisions”? (tick (√) one that applies)

a) Strongly agree	
b) Agree	

c) Disagree	
d) Strongly disagree	

9. What factors determine what company fan pages and accounts you follow/like on social media? (tick (√) all that apply)

Influence from Peers	
Promoted/Boosted pages	
Exciting content	
Interest in company's products or services	
Others	

10. With 5 being “A very great role” and 1 being “No role at all”, rank the following advertising tenets according to how much they help to grab your attention to an advertisement on social media.

TENETS	5	4	3	2	1
Use of Images					
Length of message					
Tagging Adverts on					
Trending topics					
Incentive/prizes to be won					

Puzzles and Games					
Inspirational quotes accompanying advertising messages					
Boosted/ promoted post (paid Boosts)					
Time a message is posted					
Frequency (Number of times the message is posted)					

Part 3: Effectiveness of Social media Advertisements in Influencing Buying Decisions

11. Which of the following do you rely on more for your advertising needs?

Radio	
Television	
Newspapers	
Magazines	
Billboards	

Social media	
Posters/Flyers	
Branded merchandise e.g. T-shirts	

12. Have you ever made a purchasing decision based on an advertisement you saw on social media?

Yes	
No	

13. To what extend do you trust advertisements on social media?

Completely Trust	Sometimes Trust/Distrust	Trust	Completely Distrust